

January / February 2024

The specialist international magazine for theme parks and FECs

# InterPark

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**Report**  
**Roller Coasters**

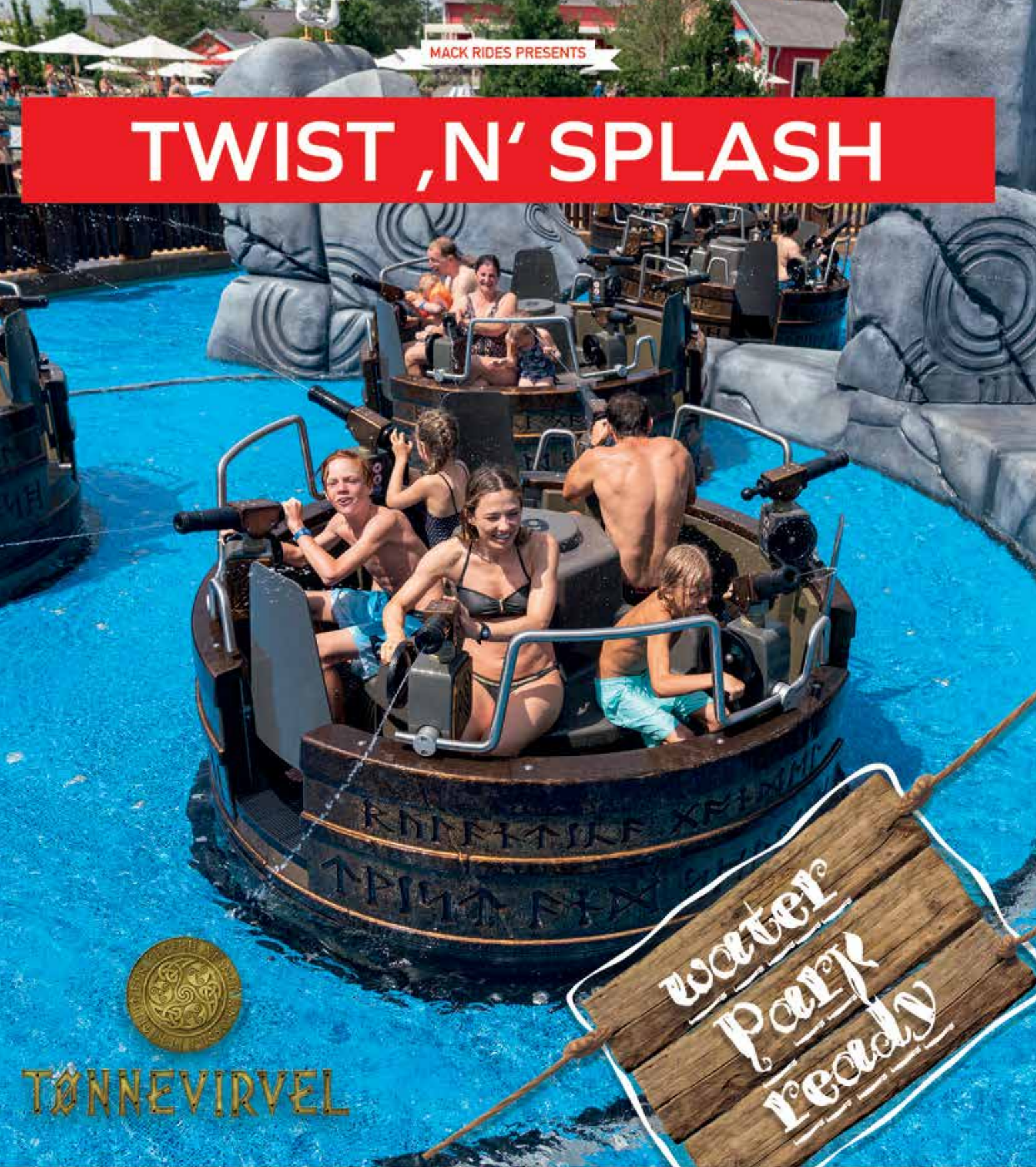
**On the Cover**  
**Big Bear Mountain**  
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**Project Profile**  
**Roaring Springs**  
**Idaho, US**



MACK RIDES PRESENTS

# TWIST ,N' SPLASH



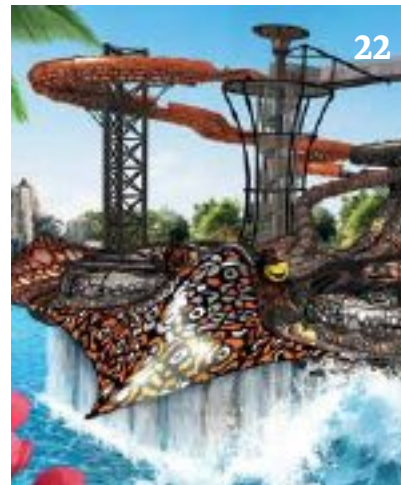
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Interactive water action now is available for water parks - the Twist 'n' Splash features a water battle that is perfect for all ages. The free floating barrels pass by the many water cannons surrounding the ride and everyone is becoming part of the action. Learn more about Tonnevirvel and other attractions of Mack Rides at [www.mack-rides.com](http://www.mack-rides.com)





## Welcome to the Jan/Feb issue of InterPark!

Welcome to the first issue of InterPark for 2024! We hope, like us, you're filled with eagerness and anticipation to get started on the year ahead... if the recent IAAPA Expo held in Orlando towards the end of the year is anything to go by, then I think we can take your answer to be a firm YES!

An incredible 36,000 attractions professionals attended the event to see nearly 10,000 exhibitors grace the Orange County Convention Centre's show floors. And it would seem that those attendees really did mean business, with the exhibitors InterPark spoke to reporting positive conversations left, right, and centre... What a positive way to start the 2024 season! You can read more about the deals, product launches and awards won in our in-depth report from News Editor, David Whitworth starting on page 25.

Staying with the IAAPA theme, I recently caught up with new Chairman of the Board, Wuthichai Luangamornlert of Siam Amazing Park in Bangkok, Thailand for this issue's Open to Question interview. Luangamornlert opened up about his hopes for further diversifying the organisation through his role, while he works to make members feel included and heard. You can read the full interview from page 52.

Our main feature this issue focuses on roller coasters - we take a closer look at some of the major players in the sector, their business profile and new launches and projects. And then there's our Project Profile, in which this issue takes a closer look at ADG's work at the water park Roaring Springs in Idaho, US.

*B Whitaker*

Beth Whitaker Editor

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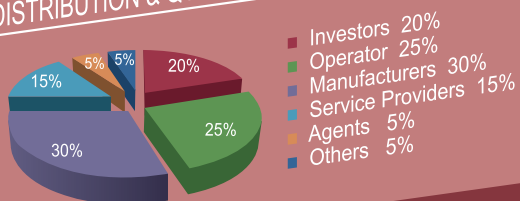


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# Europe News

The latest news and announcements

## 1 PARC ASTÉRIX CELEBRATES 35TH ANNIVERSARY

Parc Astérix in France has unveiled its new attraction, **The Tower of Numérobis** that opens as part of its celebratory 2024 season.

It will feature a thrilling flying chair ride scaling a height of 40-metres (134ft) and feature the effigy of the character Numérobis (Edifis in English story), an eccentric Egyptian architect who has 'designed' a crane-like structure to hoist riders upwards on a thrilling flight. The ride will consist of three phases: The ascent, a panoramic rotation and finally, its descent. The Tower of Numérobis will be found in the Egyptian themed area of the Gallic site and will commence

its panoramic journeys when the park reopens on 30 March 2024. The towering new attraction at the Gallic amusement park will be the centrepiece of celebrations on behalf of Parc Astérix's 35th anniversary.

Guy Vassel, who has worked at Parc Astérix for 10 years and is Deputy Director, gave InterPark a flavour of the celebrations to come and about its latest ride.

### What is in store for Parc Astérix during its 35th anniversary?

"We have an exciting program of festivities throughout the year. In terms of new attractions, our new flying chair



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# Europe News

The latest news and announcements

attraction Numérobis will take centre stage. Add to that, we are excited to present our first ever Gaulish musical show, a mixture of dancing and singing with lots of decorations and vibrant sets. The story is of a young Gaul who wants to be the best singer in the village. The show will last for 25 minutes, five times a day at the Panoramic Theatre. The performers will dress up in 80 costumes. We are very much looking forward to its premier.

“As it is the 35th birthday of Parc Astérix, we will have a new Gaulish parade led by Astérix himself. We currently have the floats of Cesar, Cleopatra, the Pirates and the Gaulish floats with all our characters. And for the birthday season we are adding a Spanish float centred around flamenco dancers and culture including new characters Pépé, Soupalognon and Crouton along with two flamenco dancers. A new soundtrack will be recorded for this birthday parade, which is composed by Benjamin Ribolet. The parade will feature a special scare twist at Halloween and be illuminated for our Christmas in Gaul celebration.

“For the summer there will be an updated log flume experience for our Le Grand Splatch attraction, which, after 35 years, will have a new name called The Revenge of the Pirates. This fresh retheme and story is based on the revenge of the pirates as they aim to defeat the Gaulish. We are adding new sound, special effects and more water to bring this story to life. And at the end of the attraction, you will get soaked! Looking towards the end of the year, we will have a new Haunted Mansion to celebrate Halloween.

“Away from the attractions, we will be adding a new restaurant in our Egyptian themed area called P'oz Kebab, centred around Iris and his test of collective levitation. We are also adding special activities within our three hotels, which accommodate 450 rooms.

## **How did the Tower of Numérobis idea come about?**

The Tower of Numérobis story comes from our unorthodox character Numérobis, the Egyptian architect of Cleopatra. He is building a crane-like structure for Cleopatra but he is not the ‘cleverest’ at his job so the structure will be different and move in different ways to his blueprint. In order to facilitate construction at altitude, Numérobis has built this crane with several arms, allowing the stones to be hoisted and stacked. The ride is great for visitors because you will fly 40-metres high above the trees and get a great view of the park. Also, the sensation is very smooth as you travel up, fly, and come back down so it is great for all the family.

## **Which ride manufacturer was chosen for the build?**

“Zamperla was chosen as the constructor of our new Star Flyer model.”

## **Can you describe your joy of welcoming more guests than ever before?**

“We are delighted to have welcomed a record number of guests in 2023 with 2.8m visiting Parc Astérix, the second most visited theme park in France. So, we want to continue to increase our attendance and the programme; our 35th birthday will provide us with a great platform to achieve this. We at Parc Astérix aim to see the park through the eyes of the kids, and through the kids you will have the smiles of the parents so it is really a family business. We feel the reaction of the visitors towards the overall aim of fun and enjoyment. I am also a guest at other visitor attractions so you can compare to ultimately work on improving the guest satisfaction at your own park. Factors such as the storytelling, the immersion – how you are in the story – that is what we do at Parc Astérix: Entertain. Whether people want to be in the comics, cartoons, the live action movie or the immersive storytelling elements we showcase to guests staying at our hotels before they enter the park, we work on these kinds of details.

## **How do you feel about winning The Best European Theme Park Award?**

“We attended IAAPA Expo Europe in Vienna and we were elected Best European Theme Park, thanks in large to Toutatis, an Intamin creation, so we were very happy to receive this accolade. Thanks to this attraction, we are at the European level of theme parks, which was our goal. This particular attraction was a huge investment at £30.6m but Toutatis will garner much interest as it holds three records: the fastest roller coaster in France at 110km/h (68.3mph), seven accelerations back and forth, which is a new European record and its 23 airtime moments, which is a world record for a steel coaster. So, it is a great combination of attraction for the rider.”

## **And this year is a double anniversary celebration?**

“Not only is Parc Astérix celebrating 35 years but 2024 is the anniversary of Astérix too. The character is 65 years old so there is also an entertaining programme of festivities for the 65 years of Astérix. The editor will have new comics and we will have the Gaulish Astérix at the Olympic Games to be held in Paris. We are going to communicate together so Astérix will be celebrated in our park and across the world.”

On the eve of Parc Astérix celebrating its bumper anniversary, the Gaulish themed park will cater for 47 attractions in six different themed zones of Gaul, the Roman Empire, Egypt, Ancient Greece, Vikings and Through Time. A big birthday celebration is about to begin.



## 2 BRAZILIAN THEMED AREA COMING TO BELLEWAERDE PARK

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A Belgium visitor attraction is set for a dose of samba magic as a Brazilian themed area heads to **Bellewaerde Park**.

The centrepiece will be an aquatic attraction with a working title of Spinning Rapids and is unique in the world.



## 3 BATTERY RIDES INSTANT NEW ATTRACTION FOR 2024

---

As UK FECs, holiday parks, and resorts prepare to open their sites for their 2024 holiday seasons one thing is for certain, millions of families will be staying in the UK for single away-days, weekend breaks and longer annual holidays during 2024 after all the travel uncertainty and difficulties of holidaying abroad - and all craving fully interactive fun and games.

Young children are still the biggest single influence in choosing a family holiday destination, so many of the leading UK operators have already chosen to add new 'Parent & Child', fully interactive, children's ride attractions to their facilities from **World of Rides**, to immediately generate more repeat visits and income by providing exciting new cash, token, and cashless attractions and experiences wherever possible, without increasing their staffing.

Bumper cars, bumper boats, disco bikes, driving schools, and outlander adventures have been the most popular choices so far, based upon each of their already proven high-income records to date, and it is also none-too surprising to note that all of them have been ordered with varying different versions of customer-friendly pay-to-play systems; but tokens still remain king with no expensive up-front and monthly on-costs and with the ability to change ride prices in an instant.

All World of Rides battery-operated rides are proudly supplied with the full UK BACTA-HSE-ADIPS safety documentation, which are now an essential requirement of BACTA membership.

You can view some of their already site-proven products at: [www.worldofrides.com](http://www.worldofrides.com)

Intamin is working on the water attraction, which will take centre stage in the themed area called Amazonia. A huge red structure, its main feature will be a gigantic ramp section for riders to enjoy a thrilling plunge to the finish.

In addition to the large water ride, two children's attractions will appear in Amazonia: a tree trunk ride and a roller coaster. Amazonia will be open for the new season on 30 March.

## 4 WHITTAKER BROS CLOSES ITS DOORS

---

One of the most respected and longest established companies in the UK amusement industry, **Whittaker Bros** closed its doors at the end of 2023.

With one of the three directors Neil Holden having lost his battle with cancer in 2022 and no investors coming forward to keep the business going, Whittaker Bros closed its doors for the final time on 31 December.

Whittaker Bros were incorporated in 1961 and became agents of the French made Reverchon Dodgem Cars as well as going on to become well-known manufacturers of the Monte Carlo Rally, Kentucky Derby, Grand Prix Racer, and Grand National Racing machines, as well as other small stake with limited prizes roulette and pusher machines, that at their peak almost every UK FEC - and holiday resort - had sited in their prime positions.

These were quickly followed by the addition of static kiddie rides and battery cars, including manufacturing the very first Gino Rondino hydraulic helicopter under licence, and before long they found themselves exporting their products to over forty countries world-wide.

The company was also one of the first and longest exhibitors at the BACTA EAG (Formerly ATEI and ATE), and its annual factory open days were legendary for the extensive free buffets and endless bottles of wine!

Whittaker Bros. were also one of the founding members of the BACTA Kiddie Ride Steering Committee, and its two directors Alan Buckley and John Whittaker were invaluable and respected sources of technical advice to the committee at all times, right up until they closed. The business and people behind it will be a great miss to all their friends and customers.



# America News

The latest news and announcements

## 1 GCI GRAND 30TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



Experienced ride manufacturer **Great Coasters International (GCI)** was present at the IAAPA Expo in Orlando last November to showcase its latest products and services and also build upon a legacy, which has been built up for many years. Indeed, the company is gearing up for what will be a momentous year - 2024 will bring in a clear resolution to celebrate the company's 30th year in existence.

Since its inception in 1994, GCI has created a long list of attractions for the leisure industry. One of which can be found in Japan in Tobu Zoo with the fabled Regina II ride. Rising from the phoenix of Regina, GCI enhanced the Japanese thrill ride for modern day riding. As part of the maintenance for Regina II, GCI worked on re-profiling and re-shaping two sections of the ride. The top two layers on all the curves were removed and successfully re-tracked. More maintenance service involved building and installing two new GCI Millennium Flyer Trains. The manufacturer replaced and put in magnetic and pneumatic brakes, worked with Consign and installed a new control/operator system. Other performance maintenance included replacing the lift hill chain and sprockets, re-doing the transfer table and spurs and adding longitudinal bracing where it was needed. Not only did the track receive some tender loving care, but GCI also built and installed new queueing gates.

To celebrate the enhancement work, Tobu Zoo organised a special event called "Ride Wondering Exploration" where the park opened the ride up for guests of all ages to come along and check out an exclusive behind-the-scenes experience of how the coaster was built, the design ideas behind it, all the work GCI did and learn how to work the operator's booth. The event drew significant interest from children and coaster enthusiasts.

It was a proud moment for GCI with the relaunch of the original Regina coaster, which is steeped in history, originally opening at the turn of the new millennium on 18 March, 2000. It operated for 19 years until its closure on



9 August, 2019. Two years later in November 2021, Tobu Zoo announced that Regina would reopen in 2023 following construction upgrades. Renamed Regina II, the coaster would rise again on 18 March 2023, 23 years to the day of its original opening.

Another project that GCI proudly announced at IAAPA Expo is a new attraction at OCT Xiangyang in China. With a working title of The Anger of Yeti, this wooden beast of a coaster will be the first wood and steel hybrid coaster in China and set a new benchmark for GCI, with The Anger of Yeti soaring to 26.2-metres (85ft) and race around at speeds of up to 78.9km/h (49mph). The Anger of Yeti will cover 789.52-metres (2590ft), have an angle inclination of -49.50° and a pivot angle of 67.2°. The hybrid attraction will take 24 passengers per train with two trains in total. Olivia Hain, Director of Public Relations at GCI said of the record-breaking ride: "The hybrid of wood and steel structure makes a superior layout that has never been experienced before, and guarantees strong visual appeal, high-thrills, and nonstop fun. The ride is located in the Kunlun Fantasy Land of the park. KunLun is the most important sacred mountain in Chinese mythology. Above the snow line is a glacier that does not melt all year round. The glacier area reaches more than 3,000sqkm and is one of the largest glacier areas in China.

GCI's storied list of roller coasters throughout its three decades of colossal coaster creations continues with the Netherlands attraction - Efteling's epic duelling wooden roller coaster Joris En De Draak (George and The Dragon), one of only a handful of competing coaster models in the world, which opened in 2010. The manufacturer also built the critically acclaimed Wicker Man at Alton Towers in the UK in 2018, a supreme ride for all the senses with fire and mist projected out of the wooden structure.

For all these reasons and more, Great Coasters International will deservingly bask in its 30th anniversary.





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# America News

The latest news and announcements

## 2 PEPPA PIG THEME PARK RIDE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Merlin Entertainments and Hasbro have unveiled a thrilling list of new attractions which are set to excite guests at the latest US-based **Peppa Pig** theme park.

“Five rides, seven themed playscapes, a water play area and even more ‘oinktastic’ experiences have been revealed for the Peppa Pig theme park in North Texas,” said Merlin, whose park will be located in Dallas Fort-Worth.

Currently under construction, it represents the second Peppa Pig theme park after opening in Florida in 2022. The popular Hasbro preschool franchise is ready for a second dose of excitement.

“Peppa encourages kids to explore the world with confidence, treating every first step as a new adventure, from the everyday to the epic. Centrally located in the heart of North Texas,, the park will be just a few miles away from the beloved Peppa Pig World of Play, an indoor attraction which features free roaming play spaces perfectly suited for preschoolers,” explained Merlin.

The new theme park will combine interactive rides and themed playgrounds with character shows and an indoor cinema for climate-controlled entertainment. “Every corner of the charming new park is crafted with preschoolers in mind, from their first roller coaster rides and fairground games with the whole family, to a pedal path adventure built just for kids, and a colourful splash pad that celebrates muddy puddles jumping fun! Through every experience, families will snort, giggle and create their first theme park memories together with Peppa and her friends,” stated Merlin.

The rides which have been unveiled include Daddy Pig's Roller Coaster, a family-friendly thrill ride with Daddy Pig and an opportunity for youngsters to ride a roller coaster for the first time.

Peppa Pig's Balloon Ride will give guests a great vantage point of the park with a joyous aerial carousel ride. Grandad Dog's Pirate Boat Ride is where you will sail with Grandad Dog on this family boat ride to find his hidden treasure. Onboard Grampy Rabbit's Dinosaur Adventure, guests will take a ride on a friendly dinosaur and discover prehistoric surprises around every corner of Grampy Rabbit's Dinosaur Park.

Parents will be able to ride along with their children too. Mr Bull's High Striker will provide surprises aplenty as once the hammer hits the bell on Mr Bull's High Striker, your family will bounce up to the sky. What goes up, must come down! Adding to the list of announced rides and attractions will be various play spaces and additional attractions where guests will be able to splash, climb and crawl, as the fun keeps coming with water play, games and just-my-size playscapes.





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# Asia News

The latest news and announcements

## 1 'POKÉPARK KANTO' LAUNCHING IN TOKYO

The latest chapter of the worldwide **Pokémon** series will find life in amusement park Yomiuriland located in Inagi, Tokyo, with a new themed area dedicated to all things 'Pokémon': 'PokéPark Kanto.' The plans will see a variety of attractions developed, based on the worldwide smash hit figure.

The Pokémon Company has already partnered with Yomiuriland in 2021 to launch Pokémon Wonder in

which guests can find handcrafted Pokémon made from natural materials.

"Pokémon fans from all over the world will gather in this place rich in nature, feel Pokémon, and create a space that can be enjoyed together beyond the walls of countries, regions and languages," stated a spokesperson on behalf of the company.

It has also been revealed that several trademarks for PokéPark Kalos and PokéPark Paldea have been filed by Nintendo in Europe for future use.



## 2 UNIVERSAL STUDIOS JAPAN SIGNIFICANTLY EXTENDS SUPER NINTENDO WORLD

**Super Nintendo World** is set to extend by 70% to welcome Donkey Kong Country.

The popular Nintendo franchise Donkey Kong will be joining the likes of Mario and friends, with its own themed area.

Donkey Kong Country will feature Mine-Cart Madness, a world's first family coaster, which will jump across gaps in the track much like the Donkey Kong Country games.

Discussing the anticipated expansion, Universal Studios Japan's Executive Officer and CMO, Taku Murayama said: "Super Nintendo World, created in partnership with Nintendo, welcomes many guests from not only Japan but from overseas every day.



"The number of visitors from regions outside of Asia, namely North America and Australia is increasing dramatically. By enhancing the experiential value with the Donkey Kong Country expansion, we are confident that we will continue attracting guests from around the world.

"This new area will create jobs and attract inbound tourism, impacting not only Japan as a whole, but the world. We hope to make those who experience this new area super energised."

Super Nintendo World at Universal Studios Japan has been a hit since it opened in March 2021 and the news that Donkey Kong will be joining the fun will only add to the buzz of Universal Studios Japan.





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# Asia News

The latest news and announcements

## 3 SEOUL SKYLINE TRANSFORMED WITH ECO-FRIENDLY AERIAL LIFTS

The Seoul City Government has announced plans to construct a new aerial lift service to transport passengers to the summit of Namsan. The updated gondola ride will provide a faster, more modern and sustainable means of transport when journeying to **Namsan Mountain** in South Korea.

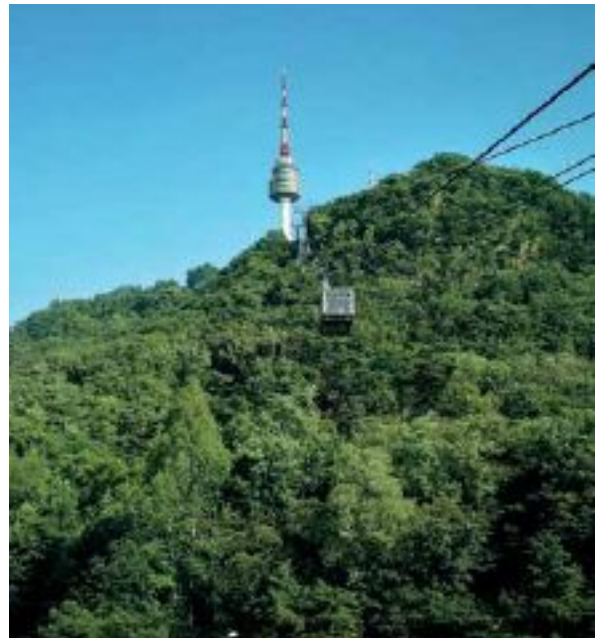
The gondola ride will cover 2,624ft (800-metres) and transport between 1,600 to 2,000 passengers on an hourly basis from Namsan Yejang Park at the foot of the mountain to its summit. Brand new gondolas will be created, 25 in all, with a capacity of 10 passengers in each. Each gondola will travel between four to five metres per second. It is estimated that visitor numbers travelling onboard will reach 1.89 million people annually.

Once at the top, guests will take in panoramic views of Seoul from the observatory deck inside N Seoul Tower. The top of Namsan also provides several food outlets.

The project is expected to be completed by November 2025 with a significant investment of KRW40bn (£28.3m). It is forecasted by the government that the project will break even within a five-year period.

The Namsan aerial lift will operate on a turnkey basis, including design and construction. The project also includes the creation of a skywalk trail linking Namsan Public Library to Namsan Outdoor Botanical Garden while existing trails will also receive a refresh.

Seoul City government is focussed on providing a more sustainable service for the city, hence the name Sustainable Namsan Project, creating numerous environmental benefits such as subsequent profits from the gondola ride will be invested in sustainability programs throughout the area.



Further environmental benefits will include providing a healthier ecosystem on the mountain, restoring habitats for different animal and plant species by improving the mountains' water cycling system. Stark statistics show that 13% of the total area on Namsan is spread with asphalt concrete. Furthermore, 70% does not allow water to seep through the surface. Therefore, the upgrades will remove unnecessary asphalt-packed roads allowing for a more sustainable water system. Meanwhile, an ecosystem education program will be created by the government to enhance tourism numbers.

Another principal reason for the upgraded gondola service is to alleviate traffic problems and pollution - eight million people visit Mount Nam peak every year and high demands have meant that its roads have been clogged up through a lack of a viable gondola service. Many choose to journey up by electric shuttle bus; all diesel tourist buses have been banned from entering Namsan Park since August 2021, due to environmental concerns.

The upgraded gondola service will improve the ageing facilities as the current service has been in operation for 62 years, dating back to 1969, overseen by private ownership. The project has suffered several setbacks along the years so this news will be a welcome relief to the city of Seoul and its nourishing environmental efforts.







## CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE WINNERS OF 2023 GOLDEN CROWN AWARDS!



The Golden Crown Awards are hosted every year in China to acknowledge outstanding achievements and products installed in China in recent years. Winners familiar to InterPark readers have been:

2023



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To participate in the 2024 Golden Crown Awards, please contact  
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# China News

The latest news and announcements

## 1 ALTERFACE PREMIERS ACTION LEAGUE POPCORN REVENGE



Alterface, a leader in interactive attractions, has announced the opening of the first **Action League: Interactive Thrill Ride** in China.

The ride will be present in Suzhou Paradise Forest World and is scheduled to open in Suzhou in May 2024.

Action League will be an interactive tournament based on a new formula where teams compete against each other up to a final winner, featuring an ultra-dynamic multi-axis rotation. Guests will partake in interactive shooting, competitive gaming, and the sensation of a rotating platform. Alterface states that, "it is an accessible yet highly challenging gameplay. This attraction allows anyone to jump right into the action without the need for training or extensive explanations."

Action League is suitable for all ages. It covers approximately 202m<sup>2</sup> and has a ride capacity of 288 riders per hour. The Action League Compact Edition is a complete package enriched by Alterface's Popcorn Revenge IP. Its audiences come from across the world from the likes of Belgium, Denmark, Japan and in 2024, China.

Alterface has partnered with Chinese firm Jiangsu Boren Culture Technology to create this innovative project. Gaining acknowledgement with the IAAPA Brass Ring Award in 2021 further established its burgeoning status.

Stephane Battaille, CEO of Alterface, expresses his excitement, saying: "I take immense pride in seeing Popcorn Revenge IP conquering the world, especially as an integral part of this groundbreaking concept that is the Action League, Interactive Thrill Ride!"

"The comically chaotic world of Popcorn Revenge is a universe that seamlessly blends humour and excitement. This promises an unforgettable adventure for guests of all ages, ensuring laughter and entertainment for everyone who dares to take on the challenge."

Situated within the extensive Suzhou Paradise Forest World, the Candy World is a three-story indoor family entertainment destination. The Action League Compact Edition is positioned in the atrium on the first floor, so the focal point is firmly on this interactive experience.

Mr Gu, CEO of Boren, expressed: "We envision this collaboration as a new beginning, with the goal of not only successfully implementing this product but also creating a thriving business around it. During the project's execution, we will actively promote the product, and we have ambitious plans to expand its presence across multiple locations. We foresee numerous opportunities for future cooperation and growth."

Action League represents a game-changer for the industry, providing an alternative entertainment buzz across FECs and malls thanks to a unique experience for its guests.







39<sup>th</sup>

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# China News

The latest news and announcements

## 2 PUY DU FOU IMMERSIVE THEATRE OPENING IN XUHUI DISTRICT

An immersive **Puy du Fou** theatre is to commence a trial operation in Xuhui District this year. Known as The Saga City of Light, guests will journey back in time to 1930s Shanghai. Lasting around two hours, The Saga City of Light will use innovative technology to recreate scenes from 1930s Shanghai and its guests will be thrust into the limelight to explore, learn and discover how life was in the bustling city back in the 30s.



An investment of £71.2m will fund the attraction and cover 46,000sqm at the west pavilion of Shanghai Everbright Convention & Exhibition Center. It will feature a theatre, themed catering, a cafe, and cultural and entertainment amenities and is expected to attract 1.2 million guests each year.

To bring the film immersion experience to life, more than 150 actors and 50 large-scale film scenes will be welcomed along with 26,000 vintage-style objects.

## 3 LEGOLAND SHANGHAI RESORT ON COURSE FOR OPENING NEXT YEAR



The latest Legoland Resort is taking shape in China as Shanghai awaits the arrival of its own Lego world. **Legoland Shanghai Resort** will offer rides and attractions that are unique to its theme park.

“The Lego brand has increased its presence and contribution in China in the past few years,” commented Jorgen Vig Knudstorp, Executive Chairman Lego Group. “We have been thrilled with the positive response the Lego brand has received in China, while seeing the fast growth of its popularity across the country. The Lego brand has formed an emotional bond with Chinese families through its unique learning-through-play experiences.

“Kirkbi and the Lego brand are excited to bring the Legoland Resort to Shanghai, and we are looking forward to offering

even more creative and imaginative experiences to Chinese families, to inspire and develop the builders of tomorrow.”

It is anticipated that the resort will open in the spring or summer of next year. Legoland Shanghai Resort is expecting to attract between three million and five million tourists a year to the city’s south-western Jinshan district. The resort will be operated by Merlin Entertainments and cover an area of 318,000sqm; along with its theme park, a 250-room Lego-themed hotel will be housed.

The creation of Legoland Shanghai Resort in China will add to a growing list of theme parks in the country, with China being the second-largest market for theme parks and proving to be a highly popular market for the leisure industry.





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# Middle East News

The latest news and announcements

## 1 SEVEN PLANS CARNIVAL THEMED FEC IN YANBU



Saudi Entertainment Ventures (Seven) is continuing to transform the leisure industry landscape across the Middle East at an exponential rate.

The latest project from the company is to develop another world-class entertainment destination in the Saudi Arabian city of Yanbu, located on the promenade of the Red Sea and a three-hour drive north of Jeddah. Seven Yanbu will be

adorned with carnival themed decorations and feature a host of elite immersive world-class rides attractions such as a Clip 'n' Climb venue, which will provide 30 climbing challenges for both adults and children to enjoy. There will also be a junior family entertainment centre, an indoor adventure golf course, 10-screen cinema and a futuristic 10-lane bowling experience.

After working up an appetite on the attractions, a restaurant serving local and international cuisine will cater for onsite dining experiences meanwhile the venue will host an array of retail outlets.

The family entertainment centre will come with a significant investment to the tune of SAR1.1bn (£240m). The venue will sprawl 36,000sqm with a built-up area of over 62,000sqm.

The delivery of Seven Yanbu will be through a partnership between local constructors Al Bawani Co. and UCC Saudi with construction currently in motion. Global architecture and planning firm Gensler is to oversee the design.

The design of the venue derives from Yanbu's rich heritage as a historic port on the Kingdom's western Red Sea Coast, as Abdullah AlDawood, Chairman of Seven explained: "Our entertainment destination in Yanbu will provide residents and visitors with a wealth of new and exciting experiences while supporting the city's rapidly developing entertainment sector.

"Seven's entertainment destination is inspired by Yanbu's beautiful natural seascape, embodying the city's rich history as one of the oldest ports in the Kingdom. Seven Yanbu will offer something for everyone."

Fakher Al Shawaf, Chairman and Group CEO, Al Bawani Co. said: "We are excited to partner with Seven to deliver this project. The design has taken into consideration Yanbu's coastal location and its history as one of the oldest ports in







Saudi. Seven's investment will support Yanbu's growing population to meet its entertainment needs. Al Bawani is well-positioned to deliver this unique destination to meet the ever-growing aspirations of Saudis".

Ramez Al-Khayyat, the President of UCC Holding affirmed: "We are delighted to spread joy in Yanbu through our partnership with Seven. We will leverage our extensive experience in building entertainment destinations to deliver the project on time, to the highest international standards."

Seven is investing more than SAR50bn (£10.7bn) through the delivery of 21 entertainment destinations to create innovative and world-class entertainment experiences. The company recently announced the beginning of construction of its entertainment destinations in the Al Hamra district of Riyadh and Tabuk. Furthermore, construction continues apace in

14 cities across the Kingdom: Riyadh, Kharj, Makkah, Jeddah, Taif, Dammam, Khobar, Al Ahsa, Madinah, Yanbu, Abha, Jazan, Buraidah, and Tabuk.





### O'Gliss Park launches Stingray

Situated in the Vendée region of France, O'Gliss Park will launch a new water attraction this summer called Stingray.



Situated in the Vendée region of France, O'Gliss Park will launch a new water attraction this summer called Stingray. "A world premiere that will immerse our guests in a water adventure and leave a lasting impression," says Managing Director Michaël Thibaud.

Manufactured by experienced Turkish water manufacturers Polin Waterparks, the slide attraction was first premiered in 2021. Its cutting-edge technology pushes the boundaries of water slide production. Its clever set up is allied to a beautifully orange and red designed Manta ray featuring an eye-catching beautiful blue theming ensemble for its flumes.

Stingray is an exhilarating water slide where riders can choose up to four lanes to take their thrilling descent. The top of the towers feature a roof and water dispensers to rain down on guests to keep them cool in the hot summer temperatures. There are two towers in total which have a capacity for up to eight people at any given time with 2 x two-person rafts launched per slide tower. As riders descend at speed through the lanes, they enter two bowl-like features where each lane

provides an alternative ending to encourage repeat rides. A journey onboard Stingray is fast, travelling at up to 14-metres (45ft) per second, with riders taking a journey of 160-metres (524ft) sliding length. Its £4.3m investment means that Stingray comes with great expectations.

InterPark discussed the new attraction with Berk Baltaoglu, General Manager Polin West Europe, to discover how the water slide came to fruition at O'Gliss Park.

#### How did the project commence with O'Gliss Park?

Following the Stingray product launch at IAAPA Orlando in 2022, Michaël Thibaud, President of O'Gliss Park, came to visit our booth along with our French Partner Emmanuel Robin, CEO of Edsun Loisirs. Thibaud, who happens to be one of our very important and loyal partners, stated that he was looking for an iconic attraction for the 2024 summer season.

Despite all the wonderful attractions of O'Gliss Waterpark and flawless management which has made it one of the most successful water parks in Europe, as well as ensuring a global





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# Waterparks News

The latest news and announcements

## EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

outreach in the amusement industry, the park was in need of a large capacity iconic item which would add an enormous value to its established success.

Following the presentation of Stingray, O'Gliss was very impressed by the fact that the ride promises a very large capacity with incomparable appeal to the customers with its own self-themed structure and size. Consequently, O'Gliss gave us the green light to start working on the project right on the spot.

After the exhibition, Polin Waterparks' architectural design and engineering team and our French Partner Edsun Loisirs team worked very hard to adapt the project to O'Gliss Waterpark in a very short time.

At this point, the project is currently on schedule to be ready for the summer of 2024.

We are very honoured to bring this iconic slide to life, together with our French partner Edsun, and we are extremely pleased to witness the realisation of another Polin Waterslide which will revolutionise the industry.

### **Tell us about the technical aspects of Stingray.**

Stingray is a first-class waterslide that is unique in terms of its design configuration, engineering, and ride path. It keeps guests returning for a new experience each time based on their choice of lane and combination of rider weights. Regardless of the path the riders take, they are sure to have an exciting experience each time as they whirl around the sides of the bowl using centrifugal force.

Stingray offers multiple distinctive ride paths but its vivid, fibreglass theming and custom colouring are inspiring and captivating. Displaying the capabilities of Polin's state-of-the-art technology 'u-texture', its artwork is long-lasting, UV protected, integral, picture-perfect, and absolutely stunning.

### **How long will the installation take?**

It will take nearly 60 days.

### **Describe Stingray to prospective riders**

Stingray is a unique, self-themed fibreglass, four-lane, eight-passenger, high-capacity racing slide.

Canvassing further opinion of Stingray, InterPark spoke to Clément Trigatti, Press Officer at O'Gliss Park.

### **How does it feel to welcome this revolutionary water slide?**

The whole team is excited and looking forward to welcoming



this unique new attraction. We're lucky enough to be the first in the world to welcome this waterslide. The design is truly incredible. Stingray will strengthen our national reputation and enable us to expand internationally. We're really lucky to be able to welcome this slide, and we're already dreaming of the future awards we hope to win.

### **What is your take on the attraction?**

Stingray is a unique waterslide in terms of design, configuration, engineering and ride. With its quadruple slides and immersive design, our visitors will enjoy a sliding experience unlike any other in the world. Whichever of the four courses they take, visitors will experience the thrill of whirling on the wings of the stingray. Overlooking the entire park from a height of 20-metres (66ft), visitors won't miss a single one of their friends' descents and will be able to do so again and again! The slide has a capacity of over 750 people per hour, equivalent to the hourly capacity of our 12 existing slides in the park. It's a toboggan for double-buoy descents and, we hope, triple-buoy descents (the simulations are fine, but will be validated in real-life tests). The toboggan is 50-metres (164ft) long and takes up 2000m<sup>2</sup> of land in the park.

### **How many visitors does the park currently attract?**

O'Gliss Park welcomed 220,000 visitors in 2023 between late June and early September. The park attracted 10,000 more visitors last season compared to pre-Covid times. This was due to 23,000 visitors coming from overseas countries such as the Netherlands, UK & Ireland etc, who represent 11% of the park's overall visitor share.

At a venue which offers 'sensations, tranquillity, relaxation and family moments, O'Gliss Park ticks the boxes of fun and entertainment. And with Stingray, the water park has its new jewel in the crown.



# HISTORY-MAKING AND GROUND-BREAKING IAAPA EXPO



*"The true magic of every IAAPA expo event is the dedication from our team. Their passion and hard work not only built this event but also strengthened the bonds of our incredible industry."*

Michael Shelton, executive director and vice president for IAAPA North America



2024 has commenced in earnest with the leisure industry abuzz with anticipation ready for the season ahead - this buzz is, in part, thanks to the huge success of a history-making IAAPA Expo at the end of 2023.

The showpiece event at Orlando's Orange County Convention Centre connected an incredible 36,173 attractions professionals on the show floor from a total registration of 41,236. There were 26,453 qualified buyers representing 18,135 buying companies, with 9,961 exhibitors representing 1,147 exhibiting companies.

The week-long IAAPA Expo highlighted innovative product launches and detailed the latest trends. Highlights from the event included a wonderful Opening Ceremony consisting of notable speeches, socials and a celebration of the industry before the show floor officially opened for professionals to exhibit, connect, discover and inspire. Meanwhile, Wednesday's Leadership Breakfast took in a fascinating keynote speech from Scott O'Neil, CEO of Merlin Entertainments. Overseeing the event was Jakob Wahl, president and chief executive officer for IAAPA:

"I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to the thousands of dedicated attractions professionals who make IAAPA Expo the thriving global community it is today," he said. "Your passion and dedication to continuously innovate and share best practices with each other is what makes this event so special. It is wonderful to see everyone collaborate for the good of the attractions industry and bring joy and smiles to millions of guests all around the world."

The IAAPA Foundation once again built on its mantra to inspire and support life-changing careers in the global attractions industry. A case in point being more than £20,000 generated towards industry scholarships.

The popular EDUTours returned for another edition with attendees visiting the best of Orlando's leisure attractions in Walt Disney World, Universal Orlando Resort and SeaWorld.



# EXHIBITOR HIGHLIGHTS

## The Deluxe Group

"This was our first year exhibiting at IAAPA and we were delighted with the calibre of visitors," said Richard Hill, Business Development Director, The Deluxe Group. Hill attended IAAPA to launch his first ever product Pub Og - a prefabricated miniature Irish Pub Experience designed for the commercial and home entertainment market in the US. "Pub Og received a great response from visitors and served as an excellent booth to demonstrate our ability to create a unique space with atmosphere and character."

Hill explained that the focus was "meeting clients from the theme park sector in the US as we have just opened a subsidiary in Florida after having completed several projects creating show sets for IP attractions."

The Deluxe Group foresees growth in the US market for resorts, hotels and theme park attractions with experiential and story led interiors and will continue outfitting cruise line interiors as "more vessels see immersive interiors designed to wow their guests."



*"This was our first year exhibiting at IAAPA and we were delighted with the calibre of visitors."*



# Sacoa USA



Time Keeper: Luminosity of Time Keeper controlled wristbands for time-played attractions.

IAAPA Expo saw Sacoa Cashless System recognised with the IAAPA Brass Ring: Best New Product award for its Kiosk K4.

Summarising the event, Sebastian Mochkovsky, CEO Sacoa USA: "The 2023 show was far superior to 2022 in terms of quantity and quality of audience. We had the largest number of leads in the history of IAAPA." At the Sacoa booth, visitors could view the award-winning Kiosk K4, as well as the QR Play and Time Keeper, launching this year.



Sebastian Mochkovsky, CEO of Sacoa USA.

## Vekoma

Vekoma enjoyed a strong year in 2023, with its award-winning family launch coasters Big Bear Mountain at Dollywood in the US and Lightning at Furuvik in Europe. This new type of family thrill coaster offers the best of both worlds – with its low height requirement it accommodates younger riders while also providing a fun coaster experience for the more adventurous.

In spring, Swedish amusement park Liseberg opened a custom Vekoma design Family Boomerang Luna and this summer the world's first Super Boomerang Cloud Shuttle was launched at Xuzhou Fantawild Wonderland in China.





## Hologate

Hologate celebrated IAAPA with an exceptional event as outlined by Leif Petersen CEO and Founder Hologate: "It consistently provides a remarkable platform to come together, forge connections, reconnect with industry partners and showcase our latest innovations."

"We met some exceptional people - passionate professionals, industry experts and leaders in the global attractions industry. The feedback we received was overwhelmingly positive, providing valuable insights. Therefore the show continues to be a cornerstone for us in establishing new connections and fostering growth."

Hologate showcased its latest generation Hyper Golf. Making its North American debut, it is a fusion between mini-golf and next-level gamified social experiences. The geometric course was laid out with challenging obstacles, meanwhile LED-equipped balls emit lighting signals, guiding you through the game, indicating whose turn it is, and keeping a real-time scorecard. "We

*"We met some exceptional people - passionate professionals, industry experts and leaders in the global attractions industry."*

were thrilled to debut Hyper Golf, this ground-breaking experience fuses the future into a classic, merging technology and physical gameplay rarely seen before."

Ghostbusters VR Academy also made an appearance at the show -a fully immersive Ghostbusters training academy where up to four participants work as a team in high-risk ghost encounter scenarios. The Hologate Arena is a pioneering multiplayer VR system in a compact 25m<sup>2</sup> space, integrating high-end VR headsets and graphics, haptic vests, and controllers to create an optimum level of immersion.





# Simworx



*"The diversity among attendees was notable, ranging from representatives of museums and aquariums to those from visitor attractions and smaller FEC venues."*

"IAAPA was marked by increased activity, positive industry announcements, and a notable uptick in our company's visibility and engagement with potential clients," commented Nicole Sangster, Digital Content producer.

"We were delighted with the calibre of visitors, witnessing the return of many regional parks exhibiting a renewed enthusiasm for long-term planning, signalling a return to stability after a couple of robust seasons. The diversity among attendees was notable, ranging from representatives of museums and aquariums to those from visitor attractions and smaller FEC venues.

We enjoy the opportunity to engage with various media companies as we actively seek partnerships in this realm - our exploration extended to engaging with audio-visual equipment suppliers, allowing us to make valuable comparisons and stay abreast of industry trends."

Simworx showcased its popular Pegasus flying yheatre due to its scalability for venues of varying sizes; the manufacturer also promoted its AGV dark ride, which requires no track or wire guides and is a fully programmable, omnidirectional, eight-seater vehicle with an integrated 3DOF motion base.

A Pegasus flying theatre attraction is set to be installed in Istanbul as part of a large development complex. "We're excited to see the final result of our new product and see riders experience it for the first time after a couple of years of development, design, manufacture



and installation," said Nicole Sangster, Digital Content producer Simworx.

"In 2024, FEC venues stand out prominently as a major trend, leveraging vacant retail spaces and prompting a surge in inquiries. The broader theme park market is experiencing a resurgence, marked by renewed confidence post-pandemic. Guests are increasingly embracing the experience economy, driving significant investment and future-planning efforts by parks globally.

"Overall, the diverse landscape of FECs, the resurgence of theme parks, and the strategic growth in international markets collectively position us for a promising year ahead."

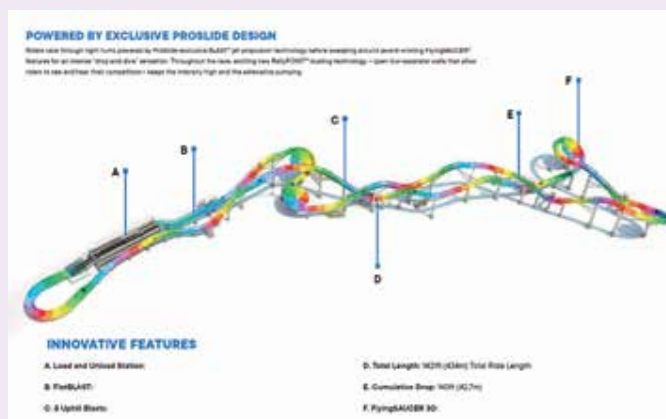


Proslide unveiled its most recent innovation, the Brass Ring Award 2023 winner for the Best New Water Park Ride: Turtle Coaster - a duelling RocketBLAST Water Coaster.

The Land of Legends Water Park in Antalya provides the world's longest four-person RocketBLAST water coaster at 1421ft. Meanwhile, 'Saifa' stands as a duelling PIPELineBLAST Water Coaster located at Siam Park, cleverly constructed on both sides of a volcanic ridge and features a 360° accelerating spiral drop from a 36ft themed tower standing."

Proslide revealed three exciting RideHouse projects in collaboration with SeaWorld. The first one, Castaway Falls, part of Busch Gardens Tampa Bay's Adventure Island waterpark. The second project will be integrated into the Aquatica waterpark at SeaWorld San Antonio, with details about the third location announced soon. Proslide is also working on projects at Disney Elethera, Bahamas, OCT Happy Valley, Beijing, China and Six Flags Great Adventure, New Jersey.

"We are thrilled about ProSlide's expansion into the Dubai market, a strategic move to meet the rising demand for innovative water rides in the flourishing Middle East," said Melissa Poirier, Director, Global Marketing & Creative Studio. "Our expansion will be a cornerstone for driving innovation and excellence in water rides, contributing to the success of the Middle East's leisure and entertainment industry in 2024 and beyond."



## RDC



RDC has enhanced its LED light design and display on its Krazee Whirl and Krazee Volts bumper cars, thanks to an increase in client interest of its LED customisation offerings to suit theming purposes.

"Our reputation as the leading bumper car manufacturer is growing exponentially in the US," an RDC spokesperson confirmed. The manufacturer has seen a rise in cruise ship ride offerings due, in part, to new construction of larger cruise ships and ship integration of FEC attractions such as go-kart tracks and water slides. "RDC bumper cars are a good fit for cruise ships due to our patented engineering electric floor design, durability, small footprint, low maintenance and proven safety and reliability. RDC's dual joystick steering and 360° spin appeals to a wide family audience segment that is symbolic of cruise ship passengers."

*"Our reputation as the leading bumper car manufacturer is growing exponentially in the US."*



## Sally Dark Rides

*"Day two of the show, we signed a contract for a second SpongeBob ride, the first outside of the US, with The Land of Legends in Turkey."*



Detailing IAAPA Expo, Lauren Weaver, Vice President Marketing & Business Development said: "Vendors had new projects under their belt to showcase, there were new products to demo, countless announcements made, and the halls were filled with attendees from start to finish. 2023 will go down as a great IAAPA."

"The Sally Dark Rides booth was jam-packed. We had a massive reveal on day one - a 10ft tall animatronic Mr Krabs from our upcoming SpongeBob's Crazy Carnival Ride. The interactive, over-the-top dark ride debuts at Circus Circus in Las Vegas in March. Day two of the show, we signed a contract for a second SpongeBob ride, the first outside of the US, with The Land of Legends in Turkey."

On display was Sally Dark Rides' recent project Uncharted: The Enigma of Penitence at PortAventura World, its first collaboration with Intamin, which won a

Brass Ring at the show, placing second for IAAPA's Best New Product. Its stand-alone attraction, Treasure Hunt: The Ride, created with fellow IAAPA exhibitor Daniels Wood Land, took home a Brass Ring Award, second place for Best New Family Ride.

"Given our recent success with Intamin, and seeing the demand for thrilling, indoor, story-based attractions, we introduced a new dark coaster product line," continued Weaver. "On the flip-side, we debuted the Mini dark ride, for those that want a dark but don't have the space. We collaborated with Angry Birds to bring the product concept to life, and in turn, inducted a new IP to our catalogue."

We still see the traditional and interactive dark ride market strong, and the demand increasing for indoor, year-round, family experiences."



# EXHIBITOR HIGHLIGHTS





# Severn Lamb

Severn Lamb quantified its IAAPA Expo as 'bustling', with much more floor traffic than in 2022. "Everyone in the industry seems very busy, which is positive," said Patrick Lamb, Managing Director.

"We knew a lot of the contacts were high quality and had some interesting meetings with walk on visitors, so we were generally very happy with the level of visitors." Severn Lamb showcased its recent battery electric train installation from the Carillon Historical Park in Ohio as well as promoting its battery electric 6000 series road tram, which has become successful with clients such as Sabino Canion, Arizona.

Severn Lamb confirmed it is commencing an electric conversion for a 30-year-old diesel-powered Lincoln train belonging to one of its clients. "These conversions represent an excellent approach to transforming existing diesel or steam trains into sustainable transportation options for attractions. We have plans for numerous



similar projects in the upcoming years as attractions move away from a reliance on fossil fuels."

A promising market for Severn Lamb is North America due to its 6000 series battery electric road trams. "We already have multiple orders on the books for this region. Also, Saudi Arabia is clearly a target market for us, the country's exciting plans for Vision 2030 means that many new attractions are already underway and visitor transport will always be required on the bigger sites."

# RCI Adventure

RCI featured its unharnessed netplay course - Adventure Trail Course at this year's show; a multi-level activity centre with a variety of climbing obstacles and elements. "It has the same wow factor as our Sky Trail courses, but requires less staffing, which is important right now," Zach Loeprich told InterPark.

Working in different end markets of the hospitality sector, Loeprich notes: "Visitor quality was high" and IAAPA was valuable because "it brought together so many of those end customers, from large amusement parks to small family-run entertainment centres.

Visitors to our booth were engaged and looking for new ideas, solutions and opportunities to expand their business. These were long, involved conversations and we loved it."

Loeprich emphasised the whole leisure industry is on the right track with greater optimism among peers. "The weight of the past few years is lifting. The traffic was back to pre-pandemic levels, especially in terms of international visitors. It didn't hurt that the weather was a little rainy and kept people at the show instead of the parks! Shout out to Mother Nature for the assist."

RCI Adventure is gearing up for a busy year thanks to IAAPA further growing

demand in its products - the manufacturer will be building the tallest indoor ropes course in Michigan, US, in February in the city of Frankenmuth. Also, a large, three-level course with construction completed in December will be opening in Queen Creek, AZ this winter as well as multiple cruise ship projects lined up for 2024.

*"Visitors to our booth were engaged and looking for new ideas, solutions and opportunities to expand their business."*





# WhiteWater

"While IAAPA Expo 2022 was still about reconnecting and talking about our pandemic experiences, 2023 was more serious about business and looking more positively ahead," said Una de Boer, Chief Marketing Officer. "People are paying more attention to evolving the attractions mix more for guests than focusing on the next big attraction. There's more value placed on attractions and areas for young children, light and sound effects, and technology for a seamless guest experience. The show also demonstrated the effectiveness of IAAPA's regionalisation efforts over the years.

"There were more journalists; prominent mainstream press like Forbes and Wall Street Journal talked to us, indicating the attractions industry is garnering more attention towards investment and development opportunities.

WhiteWater unveiled Wall Runner at IAAPA, a new water slide displaying artfully crafted arcs. This innovative ride creates a drifting experience that propels rafts sideways while maintaining forward momentum. Its unique shape provides novel theming opportunities due to its photogenic feature.

WhiteWater showcased Infinity Master Blaster, Mini Blaster and Elevated AquaForms, with its 12-version winning the Brass Ring Award for Best New Product, Water Park Ride/Attraction under US\$2m.

WhiteWater's Water Rides division has four attractions in progress in the Middle East, including Spinning Rapids Ride while its Surf division is working with FlowRider and FlowSurf and Endless Surf broke ground in Qiddiya, Saudi Arabia.

"We benefit from having a global footprint so we're able to understand the nuances in each market. We've seen more show attendees from Latin America than previous years.

Sustainability is becoming very important everywhere, with Europe generally leading the way in environmental regulations. China recently rolled out a set of detailed regulations regarding attraction safety, and we were the only foreign manufacturer to attend the first seminars. "In North America, indoor water parks are seeing a positive trend. As consumers spend less on material goods and more on lifestyle services, these fill an experiential gap by providing a tropical getaway no matter the weather."





# Triotech



Triotech unveiled SuperBlaster, an innovative multiplayer coin-op ride designed with a small footprint, full content library in an attendant-free format. Triotech also introduced SuperFly, located at NEB's Fun World, an indoor FEC located in North Oshawa, Canada. Part-immersive simulator, part-flying theatre, SuperFly offers an immersive guest experience standing onto motion platforms complemented by special effects.

Furthermore, the company showcased a full range of attractions for FECs and arcades, including its XD Dark Ride interactive theatre, the VR interactive coin-op simulator Storm, and the coin-op, media-based simulator ride Typhoon.

Triotech and BoldMove Nation also received a Brass Ring Award in the Best New Product - Major Ride/Attraction category - recognising the Smash & Reload attraction named Champi'Folies located at Le PAL theme and animal park in France.

Triotech's booth saw a high influx of high-quality visitors thanks to a versatility in addressing diverse markets, ranging from FECs and arcades to theme parks, amusement parks, tourist attractions, LBEs, museums, zoos, and aquariums, receiving an enthusiastic engagement from attendees.



"There is a notable emphasis on creating world-class attractions to cater to the diverse interests of both residents and international visitors, especially in the Middle East," commented Christian Martin VP Communications, Alliances, Talent & Culture. "The future of the attractions industry is promising, marked by a trajectory of innovation and growth. In the coming years, one can anticipate the development of cutting-edge theme parks, interactive experiences, and iconic landmarks that showcase a fusion of modern technology and cultural richness. The Middle East will witness the emergence of immersive attractions that not only entertain but also educate, offering a blend of entertainment and cultural exploration."





# ADG

"We presented our design/build and equipment side of our business this year," explained Julie Kline, Marketing Manager. "Our newest product innovation was our EpicSurf deep water standing wave technology. We're excited to roll this product out and bring the sport of surfing to people worldwide.

"We are really excited about the overall growth of the surf market. According to the Surf Industry Members Association 2022 Topline Participation Report, there are almost one million new participants practising surfing in just the last five years alone. With the incredible growth of popularity, due to the idealistic lifestyle, its new involvement as an Olympic Sport, Netflix/ Popular television networks showcasing the sport - now more than ever, people are looking to learn to surf, be around surfing and embrace the surf culture. And with manmade surf wave technologies - lagoons and standing waves, we as suppliers are able to accommodate these individuals. We're excited to see the incredible growth of the surf industry and be a part of the solution with our EpicSurf standing wave.

The biggest project is currently working on is OKANA Resort & Indoor Waterpark. The £315m project includes a two-level, 100,000sqft indoor waterpark, an 11-storied hotel accommodating 404 rooms with riverfront and lagoon views, a 4.5-acre outdoor adventure lagoon and a 12,000sqft. FEC, spa and golf simulator. is working as the owner's representative and acting as the designer and builder of the indoor waterpark and outdoor adventure lagoon pool.

"We are exhibitors in both the DEAL and Saudi Expos this spring, our COO Bruce Quay is participating as a juror at the MENALAC Awards Gala, and both Bruce and myself are volunteers on MENALAC Committees. We're looking forward to returning to the region and continue to expand into this area of the world."



*"Our newest product innovation was our EpicSurf deep water standing wave technology."*





# Roller Coasters

By Emma Davidson

Roller coasters continue to be a mainstay of the amusements and attractions industry. Here, InterPark profiles some of the key players in the sector, highlighting their latest innovations.







## MACK Rides

With roots tracing back to the 1700s, MACK Rides is a pioneer of innovative amusement rides and attractions.

For eight generations the Mack family has combined daring ideas with experience and tradition to create one-of-a-kind, memorable rides. What started as a small carriage workshop has grown into a modern, family-owned ride production making a big impact across the industry.



MACK Rides is owned by Dr Roland Mack, Jürgen Mack, and Michael Mack. All three share the passion of creating outstanding attractions. With their experience and willingness to break new ground, the company develops each day to build some of the best rides in the industry. With its own showcase at Europa-Park, MACK Rides learns every day from the daily operation and maintenance. This expertise is completely unique to the industry.

In 1958, Franz Mack took over MACK Rides together with his brothers. He was inspired to open a theme park in Germany as an exhibition site for MACK's state-of-the-art amusement rides, including flat rides, dark rides, log flumes, tow boat rides and roller coasters. Europa Park opened on 12 July 1975 with an area of 16 hectares. Initially, the park was managed by Franz Mack. Later his sons Roland and Jürgen joined the management. It counted 250,000 visitors in the first year, 700,000 in the second, and passed the million mark in 1978.

Now, Europa-Park is Germany's biggest theme park with an attendance of more than five million visitors each year. Over 90% of the rides were created and built by MACK Rides. Covering a total area of 95 hectares, 18 themed areas offer around one hundred rides, several shows, and 13 roller coasters. The park also includes six hotels, a camping site, a tepee village, a cinema and a conference centre.



Europa-Park has been ranked number 19 out of the 25 most visited theme parks in the world and is the third most visited theme park in Europe after Disneyland Paris and Efteling, as well as the most visited seasonal theme park in the world. The park received 5.4 million visitors in 2022.

As a family business MACK Rides is proud to look back on a 235-year-old history and is today one of the market leaders for the development and construction of amusement park attractions. Using innovative new developments and customer-oriented ride construction, MACK Rides has always been a leading force in the world of theme park rides.

The unique constellation of being a ride manufacturer and park operator allows MACK Rides to develop – from practice, for practice – optimal solutions for its customers. It's this uniqueness that builds the solid foundation of MACK's areas of expertise: quality, reliability, durability, investment security and design.







## Fabbri Group

Located in Calto, Italy, Fabbri Group is a complete service provider to the theme parks and attractions industry.

From concept to design, production, installation and after-sales, Fabbri Group is committed to the customer from beginning to end.

Continuously striving for excellence and investing in the quality of its rides, Fabbri Group uses cutting-edge technology to respond to the ever-changing needs of the leisure market. Regularly developing new ride concepts, the company creates exciting attractions for different age groups and customers, ranging from fixed parks to malls and family entertainment centres and travelling show operators to hotels, resorts, events and more.

With an international clientele through a sales network of affiliated companies and sales and representative offices, Fabbri Group exports its rides all over Europe, as well as all over the world. Fabbri Group's rides can be found on every continent.

Innovation, together with durability and quality, is a huge strength of the company. The team is fanatical about enhancement, investing considerably in research and development, and unceasingly improving each ride, as well as every phase of the ride creation and manufacturing process. The company's innovative technical solutions make all rides high-performance products, with its proud customers taking full advantage of them.

Safety is one of the paramount areas of focus of Fabbri Group's R&D department. Its engineers work in close collaboration with international inspection and certification bodies, such as TÜV, Vinçotte and ECO, and all rides are compliant with the latest and strictest standards worldwide, such as EN, ASTM, GB and GOST, to name a few.

The company is also ISO-9001, EN 1090-1:2009+A1:2011-EXC3 and ISO 3834-2:2006 certified and uses the highest

quality systems to make sure that it manufactures only the safest possible rides. Fabbri Group also carries out numerous meticulous factory tests on each ride before they leave the factory, so as to verify its safety, quality and operation.

Fabbri Group is a small company, which makes it adaptive and highly responsive to customers' requirements, allowing the team to offer tailor-made solutions in a very short amount of time. All rides are fully customisable to satisfy any customer needs, as well as meet their specific budget and location requirements. An example of this is in the company's recent Voyager ride, a mix of the Avenger and Air Spider ride models. By means of a DC motor, the arm swings until it makes a complete 360° rotation while the gondola (24 seats) rotates up to the maximum speed of 12 rpm. During its descent, the arm reaches a speed which is much higher than the force of gravity and which, added to the rotation of the gondola, leads riders to experience the thrills given by a 4.0 Gforce.

Additionally, Fabbri Group recently presented one of its largest ever installations in the Middle East. Six major rides at Lusail Winter Wonderland in Qatar are proudly designed and manufactured by Fabbri Group. The park is a new 100,000sqm theme park located in the heart of Al Maha Island, the country's ultimate entertainment and leisure hotspot. The park offers something for the whole family, with over 50 rides and attractions, bespoke food and drink, live entertainment and loads more. A stand-out landmark attracting residents and visitors from all over the world, the theme park has been one of the most talked about openings of recent times. The most appreciated rides include Fabbri Group's Ferris Wheel (53-metres high, 36 cabins, six seats each), Booster (50-metres high, 16 seats), Scary Drop Tower (50-metres high, 12 seats), Spider (14-metres high, 16 seats), Telecombat (four-metres high, 24 seats) and Magic Dance (six-metres high, 32 seats).

# Great Coasters

Great Coasters will celebrate its 30th anniversary in 2024.



The company was founded back in 1994 by Mike and Clair Hain Jr Boodley, two well-respected coaster builders in Sunbury, Pennsylvania. In 1996, the firm opened Wildcat at Hersheypark which contained several elements that Great Coasters would become known and loved for, including tight sweeping curves, high-speed and dramatic curved drops.

Recently, Great Coasters worked on the first ever wood and steel hybrid coaster, Mad Racers at OCT Xiangyang in China. The hybrid structure creates a ground-breaking, one-of-a-kind layout that guarantees strong visual appeal, high-thrills, and non-stop fun. The ride is located in the Kunlun Fantasy Land area of the park. It reaches 26.2-metres in height, with a total track length of 789.52-metres. Passengers enjoy top speeds of 78.9 km/h, with a 49.5° angle of inclination and a pivot angle of 67.2°. The ride runs two trains, each carrying a capacity of 24 passengers.

The OCT Xiangyang Beach Water Park project covers an area of 150,000sqm and was officially opened to the public on June 24, 2020. Drawing on the essence of Chinese culture and based on ocean legends and stories, it offers four imaginative theme areas for ocean exploration.

The areas include 'Discovery Port' with an exotic coastal town style, 'Lost Bay', which is full of ancient mythology, 'Exotic Island' that features tropical island wonders and seabed exploration, and 'Adventure Cave' – a mediaeval area with steam machine style attractions. OCT Xiangyang creates an all-round immersive experience through the four-fantasy ocean areas, original and vivid story cultural IP, day and night carnival performances, customised theme restaurants and more.

As well as celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2024, Great Coasters is preparing to open a brand-new wooden coaster named Colossus at Six Flags Qiddiya, a new theme park for Saudi Arabia. One of the most ambitious and talked about theme park projects of recent times,

Six Flags has a goal to open with multiple record-breaking attractions including the tallest, longest, and fastest roller coaster in the world.

The park will feature 28 rides and attractions across 75 acres. It will be divided into six themed lands that will make Qiddiya Six Flags' most immersive theme park yet. The first land is Steam Town which is said to be a place where the past merges with the future. Discovery Springs will focus on water and include many water features and fountains. Twilight Gardens will showcase beautiful foliage that glows at night. The Valley of Fortune will invite guests to experience adventure while showcasing Arabian architecture, World Expos of the Past will be the focus of the Grand Exposition, and City of Thrills will feature the park's signature coaster, Falcon's Flight.

Great Coasters' input will be a steel track with a wooden structure that uses the company's infinity flyer trains. The Infinity Flyer trains are Great Coasters innovative trains that allow for tighter turns, quicker crests, faster valleys, inversions, and more track in less space. There are 80% fewer welds, and the chassis is composed of large, machined parts.

Looking ahead to an exciting 2024, Clair Hain, founder and owner of Great Coasters said: "We celebrate a milestone birthday in 2024, so there is a lot to celebrate and look forward to. I think there are a lot of promising opportunities in Europe over the next couple of years, so we're looking forward to branching out and seeing what we can achieve in that market.

"Since last year we have had a lot of parks reach out to enquire about our Titan Track, which is a steel track that's capable of just about anything, including launches, inversions, tighter corners for our Infinity Flyer trains, and more extreme coaster elements. We're expecting to put our Titan Track product on pre-existing and future projects this year and next."





## Jinma Rides

Guangdong Jinma Entertainment Corporation Limited was founded in 2007.

It provides a one-stop service for amusement parks and cultural and tourism attractions, from product development, manufacturing and installation to park planning, investment, operation and more.

Jinma operates its businesses in the emerging cultural industry, cultural tourism equipment manufacturing industry, and game and amusement industry. By integrating creative concepts, advanced technologies and safety concepts, Jinma has developed a large portfolio of more than 300 rides under 13 categories, covering coasters, tower rides and immersive attractions, and many of them are the first of its kind ever built in China and abroad.

Jinma owns intellectual rights to all ride products it supplies. Over the years, Jinma has gained a large market share in the domestic high-end amusement attraction market, supplying ride products to theme parks and major amusement parks. Globally, Jinma has its rides installed in over 30 countries and regions.

As a pioneer in China's amusement industry, Jinma continues to enhance its research and development capacity. Relying on its core advantages of independent creativity, planning and R&D capabilities, strong production capacity and sound marketing abilities, it vows to further develop high-end markets both at home and abroad, striving to build itself into a prominent global brand.

Located in Zhongshan, China, Jinma's production

facilities cover a total area of 120,000sqm. Its three production bases are complete with advanced plants and equipment. The development and production base in the Torch Development Zone is focused on the fabrication of conventional amusement rides, while the R&D and production base at Port County concentrates on high-tech products for cultural tourism. Jinma built a fabrication base at Banfu County, specifically dedicated to the making of roller coaster tracks.

With years of experience in the sector, Jinma has built up a competent production and installation team composed of top industry professionals and secured itself as the leading amusement ride manufacturer in China.

Engaging top professionals in the industry, Jinma has been able to assemble a professional research and development team, headed by leading experts in respective disciplines. This strong team is composed of nine senior engineers, including two professor-level engineers, and 180 full-time designers and developers, in disciplines of mechanical engineering, mechanics, automation, electronic information, computer science, composite materials, industrial design, art and craft, and multimedia content creation.

With its strong capacity in machinery, FRP moulding, metal heat treatment, welding, electronic and electrical manufacturing, assembly and installation, audio and video system integration, Jinma is able to deliver products that meet particular process requirements and standards for projects of various sizes. Jinma continues

to pursue excellence and make improvements to ensure that its products maintain a high level of quality. Regarding quality as its lifeline, it has set up a Quality Assurance department in charge of quality control and supervision.

The QA implements a full life-cycle quality management system in compliance with the requirements of ISO9001, covering aspects of creativity, planning, research and development, procurement, production, inspection and after-sales service. Jinma rigidly follows various quality control guidelines, and implements a comprehensive quality management strategy, working on every single process with a craftsman's spirit.

Jinma owns patented technologies for all its products. Up to date, it has obtained more than 130 patents under various categories. Long recognised as a major pioneer in the industry, Jinma was invited by regulatory authorities to partake in the drafting of over 10 National Standards related to large-scale amusement rides. Jinma has established a comprehensive technical system with its overall technical capacity ranked top in the domestic industry and recognised as advanced in the international market. Jinma has applied most of its core technologies in its product development. It continues to launch a number of ride attractions at advanced levels every year. Those new launches are superior in terms of accuracy, stability and reliability.

Some of Jinma's newest rides include the launch of the LSM coaster, flying coaster, giant wheel, chute ride, AGV, flying theatre, and newly developed family rides. The flying coaster debuted at Silk Road Paradise, ShaanXi, China in September 2023. This is a special flying coaster which has 890-metre track featuring roll, horizontal loop, dive flight and drive turn with a maximum speed of 94.5km/h.

Jinma's AGV ride incorporates the laser navigation technology in the riding system, resulting in supreme dark ride without the use of a trackway. Guided by the pre-set routing program, the wheeled vehicles move from scene to scene, developing and playing out the plots structured in the storyline for all anticipating guests on-board. The laser enabled navigation system is able to navigate and position individual vehicles with great precision.

In Jinma's flying theatre family, the FY-63A uses futuristic flying motorcycles as carriers rather than rows of traditional seats mounted on a huge platform. By matching up media to the motions enabled by their elaborately engineered riding system, this flying theatre delivers the most unique ride experience to all guests.

One of Jinma's most notable giant wheel projects is the GLC-52C, a model that is the first-of-its-kind on the market. Four elegant columns, simple single pipe rim, round cabins, wire-rope spoke design, are all integrated in the novel Giant wheel GLC-52C. The wheel's diameter measures 49.5-metres. When installed, the overall height is around 52-metres. The drive rim of the wheel is supported by four strong columns, with two on each side. 30 cabins are suspended on brackets evenly distributed around the drive rim. Each cabin is decorated and pivots steadily under gravity as the wheel rotates. Minimalistic and iconic, GLC-52C is ideal for property developers.



"In 2024, the development trend of roller coasters may be affected by a variety of factors, including technological progress, consumer demand and environmental pressure," explains Will Wei, Sales Manger of Jinma Rides.

"With the development of virtual reality and augmented reality technology, future roller coasters may provide passengers with a more realistic and immersive experience. Passengers can enter a new virtual world through head-mounted devices and experience a more exciting and thrilling journey.

"In order to increase passenger participation and exploration, future roller coasters will likely add more interactive elements, too, so that passengers can interact through handles, buttons or other means to affect the speed, or special effects of the roller coaster, giving each ride a different experience.

"With the increase in environmental awareness, we will also see more environmentally friendly materials being used, such as recyclable materials and low-carbon materials, to reduce the impact on the environment. "Finally, roller coasters may adopt smarter designs to optimise energy consumption, improve safety, and improve riding comfort. For example, sensors and intelligent systems can be used to monitor the status of roller coasters in real time and identify and solve potential problems in a timely manner. In short, there may be many changes and developments in roller coasters, no matter how they change, their essence is still an amusement ride that provides excitement and happiness."





## Vekoma

Vekoma Rides is one of the largest roller coaster and attractions manufacturers in the world and a market leader in the industry with a presence in over 50 countries.

It is known for its quality and innovation as reflected in the many installed family and thrill coasters and specialist attractions that meet the most stringent standards for safety, quality and comfort.

Vekoma's passion for the pure joy of the ride is reflected in the game changing attractions designed and built by the 300+ experts that work at the company. Vekoma has everything under one roof with the world's largest in-house expertise - from sales, R&D, engineering, production, project management, to parts and services. It's where cutting-edge engineering meets creative design and imaginative storytelling to create an unforgettable experience.

Based in the Netherlands and with a presence in different countries around the world, Vekoma is easily accessible to their customers anywhere in the globe.

Vekoma Rides has over 450 rollercoasters and attractions installed worldwide and many new projects rolling out over the next few years. One of the milestones in the roller coaster industry is the world's longest and first launched flying coaster F.L.Y. that opened in 2020 at Phantasialand in Germany. It marks a new generation of flying coaster with its technological advances pushing the boundary of the rider experience. On this unique ride, riders are comfortably and safely harnessed in as they start in a sit-down position and are transported sideways to a dark ride section. They are immersed in a story to save the world using their flying super powers.

The track and seats are then turned 90° creating a smooth transformation from dark ride to flying coaster from where the flight begins and riders experience inversions, airtime moments, near miss moments and more. With their arms stretched out, face down and parallel to the track, this is as close as it gets to flying like superman.

Together with the team of Phantasialand, Vekoma started working on the new flying coaster back in 2014. It took until 2017 to finalise the new train design and begin prototype testing. In 2018, the track production was completed. The ride installation was a huge challenge due to the heavy theming, different floor layers, site complexity and the lack of space. It has been one of the most complex building sites they have ever experienced.

With F.L.Y. Vekoma has created a total flying experience like never seen before in the world and set the bar for attractions of the future. In 2021 this new flying coaster was awarded with an IAAPA Brass Ring Award for Best New Product.

Vekoma enjoyed a strong year in 2023, with the opening of its award-winning Family Launch Coasters 'Big Bear Mountain' at Dollywood in the US and 'Lightning' at Furuviik in Europe. This new type of family thrill coaster offers the best of both worlds - with its low height requirements it accommodates younger riders while also providing a fun coaster experience for the more adventurous. The whole family can join for a ride and

create memories for a lifetime. It's the culmination of decades of Vekoma's meticulous work to revolutionise and perfect the family coaster experience. The ride's effortlessly easy maintenance, ergonomic seating for all sizes and high-level safety makes it an embodiment of coaster excellence.

'Big Bear Mountain' has plenty of surprises, starting with the size of the coaster with 3,990ft of track. It is not everyday that we see a massive coaster for such a wide audience. The launches are forceful, the layout is full of airtime, ground hugging in different sections and cool curves and twists. The speed is high (max 48mph) and consistent. 'Big Bear Mountain' is almost like two family coasters in one, given how long the ride is and how the first section and second section are different. The ride packs three launches and an astonishing 23 airtime moments, with positive forces like no other family attraction – all with a 39ins height limit. While sitting in the train, you no longer feel like a park visitor but like an expeditioner about to embark on adventure.

Through the fun story elements, onboard audio and phenomenal theming including highly-detailed coaster trains resembling four-wheel-drive SUVs and working headlights and taillights, you really are immersed in the ride experience. Moreover, the impressive capacity of 1,000 riders per hour slices waiting times. The MK711 train offers a comfortable and smooth ride with safety and ergonomics as the focus of the design. The body of the train presents an open design to deliver the best ride experience possible. Riders are restrained by a padded individual lap bar that comfortably locks riders into place, but does not take away from the ride experience. The locking system applied consists of stepless hydraulic units allowing for a safe and comfortable ride for both adults and children, with redundant hydraulic locking.

The train has a special rear accessibility coach with a single side load/unload with a foot pedal operated door integrated into the body of the vehicle which makes the ride accessible for riders with a disability by providing an ADA-Compliant transfer surface.

Family-thrill coasters with such a low height restriction are scarce. Family coasters with a much taller height restriction are common, which ultimately leave a large number of younger visitors out. Vekoma has been able to successfully tackle that with 'Big Bear Mountain'. It's a ride that the whole family can enjoy together.

In the summer of 2023, the world's first super boomerang 'Cloud Shuttle' was launched at Xuzhou Fantawild Wonderland in China. The super boomerang is designed to offer a unique combination of modern-age thrill ride elements, all in a compact, narrow space.

Multiple launch sections, a vertical spike at 52.5-metres height which offers an iconic appearance of the park, maximum speed of 9 km/h, forward backward ride, vertical drops, four inversions, and 10 airtime elements - all of this action is packed into this compact design. The Super Boomerang brings Vekoma's successful Boomerang concept to new levels of excitement and thrills to a wide demographics, with the rider height restriction of 1.2-metres. The ride uses the state-of-the-art LSM launch system, which is the most maintenance-friendly driving system available in the market.



Looking ahead to 2024, this will be a special and record-breaking year for Vekoma in the USA. Thrill coasters like the tilt coaster 'Circuit Breaker' will open at Cotaland, and North-America's first super boomerang 'THE FLASH: Vertical Velocity' will rise at Six Flags Great Adventure. Furthermore, the Horus Family Coaster 'Midnight Flyer' will open at Santa's Village in Jefferson, family boomerang rebound 'Snoopy's Soap Box Racers' will open at Kings Island and 'Holiday World & Splashin' Safari is opening a custom design family boomerang 'Good Gravy!' located in their Thanksgiving section.

Other 2024 projects around the globe are a suspended thrill coaster and family boomerang with intertwined design at Emerald Park in Ireland, a Kalypso family coaster and Mine Train at Energylandia in Poland, a family boomerang and fifth Top Gun Launch Coaster at Fantawild in China. In Australia, Dreamworld will open the world's first switchback coaster and Warner Bros. Movie World will open a family boomerang racer and suspended family coaster at the world's first Wizard of Oz precinct.

"2024 is an unprecedented year for Vekoma globally and especially in the US, given the incredible number of projects we are working on. We are not only installing several new rides, but they are also very diverse, ranging from family-oriented rides to high thrill coasters. Several of the coasters we are installing in the US will be the first of their kind in America, like the Tilt Coaster, Super Boomerang and Family Boomerangs. We are also working hard on and gearing up for a successful 2025 with a variety of new rides opening next year," said Ricardo Tonding Etges, Vice Presidents Sales & Marketing Americas.

"I expect a continuous focus on family-thrill coasters that appeal to a wide demographic and draw more families to the parks. This is a trend that is here to stay. We are also seeing a focus on uniqueness and innovation when it comes to ride systems, with different types of vehicles, ride elements, drive systems and theming. Parks do not want to do more of the same. Considering Vekoma's focus on innovation and on creating new experiences on a constant basis, we are in a great market position."





## Intamin

Founded as a small, local family business and carefully grown into a large, international leading force in the theme parks and attractions industry, Intamin has worked hard for its name to be synonymous with inventive, state-of-the-art amusement rides.

The company was founded in 1967 and over the following 50 years has become a globally recognised brand within the amusement industry. From the beginning, Intamin was well received and to this day, the company continues to stand out from the crowd. Intamin was formed by three men sharing a small apartment as an office in Bern, the capital city of Switzerland, and has now evolved to become an independent company with hundreds of employees in many countries worldwide.

Intamin recently collaborated with Cité de l'espace on the new immersive ride LuneXplorer. This unique ride, the second one of its kind in Europe, allows visitors to undergo a simulated take-off and journey to the Moon, complete with the physical sensations involved in space exploration. The experience unfolds in four 10-minute sections, beginning in the lobby of a renovated 1,500sqm building dedicated to moon missions. To board one of the capsules and experience lift-off, guests must be at least 1.3-metres tall.

Stage one allows guests to discover and compare the Apollo lunar missions with the new Artemis missions to the Moon, involving the European Space Agency (ESA) alongside NASA. Then they must compose their crew, which can be a maximum of four people, who will follow the instructions of ESA astronauts that will prepare you for the mission. Ten other capsules will take off simultaneously.

After the crew is assembled, it's time to take off to the moon. Riders take their place aboard the capsule and experience the accelerations and decelerations of such a journey, akin to astronauts on a mission. As with all experiences, this one concludes with a debriefing based on your flight parameters, providing insights into the return to the Moon and future projects.

The equipment on LuneXplorer operates on a

centrifuge principle, where the rotation speed induces acceleration on guests comfortably seated within ride cabins designed to mimic the environment of a rocket launch module. In total, there are 10 cabins, each accommodating four experimenters. Not just an attraction, LuneXplorer is also a scientific experiment. The primary goal is to immerse passengers in the experience of being astronauts while elucidating the principles of forces.

Intamin has also announced the development of the Hubless Wheel – a reimagined classic ride for theme parks of the future. The Hubless Wheel, gives the traditional spokeless wheel a contemporary twist with its sleek and modern structure. This new wheel offers an abundance of space, allowing you to unleash your creativity and bring your ideas to life.

Designed for optimal space efficiency, Intamin's Hubless Wheel's small footprint provides theme park designers room to explore ideas. Its see-through centre not only offers guests an unobstructed view of the surrounding skyline, but also provides additional space to curate new experiences and captivating shows for guests. Make the most of this unique space by seamlessly integrating other attractions, projecting immersive light shows, or using it as a stunning frame to showcase the breathtaking views beyond.

"We are looking forward to some great projects in 2024," said Intamin. "Hot Racer in Walibi Rhone Alpes will be our first Hot Racer in Europe. The Dynamic Motion Stage 'Dance Macabre' at Efteling in Autumn will be a world-first. Catapult Falls is the first Flume Ride with a booster, and opening in SeaWorld San Antonio is the world's first flume ride with a booster. We're also opening our first UltraSurf at Six Flags over in Georgia, 'Swingi' the gyro swing in Linnanmäki, Finland and the Spinning Raft Ride at Bellewaerde in Belgium. We are set for a busy and exciting year."

# Gosetto

Gosetto is a manufacturer based in Northern Italy that specialises in dark rides, family rides, fun houses and many other bespoke entertainment attractions.

Founded in 1977, Gosetto is unique in that it designs everything and produces all its ride components on-site and carries out maintenance and service reports, too. All rides are tested at the factory before being sent out to the customer, who Gosetto almost always has a close, trusting relationship with.

One of the company's most notable rides is the Cosmic Spin, a dynamic family coaster that features five cars, each accommodating three riders. The ride is a heart-pounding 360° rotation as riders traverse a railroad-type track, maneuvering steep hills and sharp turns. Whether indoors or outdoors, this coaster is versatile and space-efficient, requiring only a modest area of 25-metres x 12-metres. Complete with a customisable station and fire-retardant fiberglass cars, the Cosmic Spin ensures a safe yet thrilling ride, promising shared moments of joy among riders.



Adding to the excitement is the Spinning Coaster, a captivating ride with an eight-shaped path. Comprising four rotating cars, each with four seats (two in the front and two in the back), this coaster offers a unique rider experience. The central body of the cars is standardised, but the front is a canvas for customisation, allowing for the incorporation of the park's logo, mascots, and vibrant colours. As the vehicles reach the station, they automatically realign for loading/unloading, ensuring a seamless and secure operation. Operators are stationed in a closed safety area in order to manage the coaster's movements with precision.

Versatility is key, as the Spinning Coaster is suitable for both indoor and outdoor settings, offering two versions: the standard (27.8-metre x 15.8-metre) and the compact (24.4-metre x 13.7-metre). These coasters stand as a testament to Gosetto's commitment to delivering top-notch amusement park experiences, combining innovation, safety, and the thrill of shared excitement.







# Roaring Springs | Meridian

By David Whitworth

Roaring Springs water park is making a splash with an expansion plan that will increase the venue by more than 40% - making it one of the largest water parks in the United States.

Based in Meridian, Idaho, Roaring Springs opened this past summer season debuting an expansion of attractions designed and built by Aquatic Development Group (ADG). Currently dubbed the largest water park in the northwest, the expansion consists of a multi-level play structure, an action river, an activity pool, Geyser Grill & Bar, along with other amenities, which completes Phase 1 of a seven-part phased expansion plan to be carried out over the next 10-15 years.

Roaring Springs worked in partnership with ADG to design, build, and supply its wave generation system for the Class 5 Canyon. Idaho's first action river features waves where guests can ride with kickboards. The area covers 14,250sqft and uses ADG's Breakers river wave generation system and boosters to give guests a great rush of water-filled adrenaline.

Roaring Springs' new expansion covers all bases, to cater for all ages. Children will benefit greatly from the new kids' area Camp IdaH2O, an 8,000sqft interactive multi-level play structure including theming with iconic Idaho animals and birds, seven intermediate slides, 100 play features, and a novel potato head themed dump bucket for good measure. Another addition to the park is the Critter Crossing, an activity pool spanning 3,200ft featuring forest-themed decorations and water basketball. In addition to the new rides, Roaring Springs also added 16 luxury cabanas, upscale pool deck furniture, rest rooms, and additional parking.

A further 150 jobs will also be created thanks to the expansions, providing further opportunities for the local community. Going forward, Roaring Springs will add new elements in each of its seven-phase plan - phases





2-5 will include some of the newest and entertaining water rides in the world meanwhile phases 6-7 will provide additional parking.

Tiffany Quilici, Chief Marketing Officer Roaring Springs, Wahooz Family Fun Zone, & Galaxy Event Center and Julie Kline, Marketing Manager Aquatic Development Group, gave their thoughts on the expansion project.

#### HOW DID THE EXPANSION PROJECT COME ABOUT?

"The multi-phased 10–15-year plan for the Roaring Springs' expansion came about from years of planning







and conversations about what would work for Roaring Springs as a marketable and successful expansion plan to support the guest base. Roaring Springs specifically identified the need for more attractions for guests 5ft and under. With the planned seven phases, Roaring Springs will increase its footprint by over 40%, making it one of the largest water parks in the United States. 2023 was our most exciting season that we have ever opened with the anticipation of our new expansion."

#### WHAT WERE THE CHALLENGES WITH THIS PROJECT?

"A two-year project timeline, including careful pre-planning and 15 months of construction minimised the challenges, but hurdles always exist in any project. Roaring Springs ordered all supplies, from kitchen equipment to cabana furniture, as far as one year in advance to avoid still present supply chain issues. Roaring Springs broke ground on the project in March of 2022 in order to build through the summer, but that also meant building through the winter, and working around snow and cold temperatures. Operating the existing water park alongside a major construction zone posed challenges, including using the catering pavilions to store supplies (fortunately Roaring Springs has an adjoining indoor event centre called the Galaxy where they were able to serve groups their catered meals)."

#### WHAT WAS THE THOUGHT PROCESS BEHIND THIS FIRST PHASE?

"Originally, for this first phase Roaring Springs went into the design with the goal of adding capacity to the

existing lazy river. After discussions on marketability and ways to differentiate the property, we at ADG had the opportunity to present the concept of a second river ride attraction to meet the capacity goals, deliver a more thrilling ride experience and bring a different experience with a wave-action swim river to Roaring Springs. ADG and Roaring Springs have collaborated on several exciting ideas and projects in the past including the latest expansion and we were excited to open the new area for the summer 2023 season."

#### WHICH PHASE HAS BEEN THE MOST DIFFICULT SO FAR?

"The \$22m (£18m) phase one was the most difficult, as it's the largest, and includes infrastructure for each of





the six phases to come in the next decade, including guest seating capacity, an oversized restaurant kitchen, underground pipes and power, and filtration capacity. Phases 2-5 feature some of the newest, most thrilling water rides in the world. Phases 6-7 are additional parking. Exact ride selection will be made as new rides continue to be designed. The launch date of each phase will be announced as Roaring Springs attendance continues to grow."

#### **WHAT IS IT LIKE WORKING ON ONE OF THE LARGEST WATER PARKS IN THE US?**

"Beyond our pride in the size of the park, we are very proud of working on Roaring Springs because of the creative team of operators running the facility. Roaring Springs has done an amazing job over the many years of operation - penetrating the market, consistently keeping the park updated, and prioritising an outstanding guest experience year after year. As an operator, they are very aware of what sort of attractions and amenities resonate with their guests. For us, we were excited to go through the design process together because we were able to throw ideas back and forth, collaborate, build new concepts, and deliver an exciting, unique, and guest-centric first phase expansion at Roaring Springs. We're also proud to announce that Roaring Springs' expansion won a Leading Edge award at this year's World Waterpark Association conference for one of the most innovative projects of the year."



# HSE UPDATE AND LAUNCH OF NEW ADIPS AUDITS REGIME

By Carl Hagemann, General Manager, ADIPS

Those of you involved in managing the safety and health risks on your park will know only too well that the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is keeping a keen eye currently on safety standards on parks and fairgrounds nationwide.

ADIPS works closely with HSE and recently the regulator gave an overview of its work plan for 2024. We can expect around 100 visits to theme parks and fairgrounds throughout this year, said the industry's HSE Inspector, David Kivlin.

At the Fairgrounds Joint Advisory Committee (FJAC) meeting in December hosted by ADIPS' governing body, the Amusement Devices Safety Council (ADSC), David gave us the headline figures for 2023, which included a much-publicised Summer campaign of inspections. They were:

- 100 visits to be completed by end of year
- by December, 29 had resulted in enforcement action - just over 40% of those sites visited, representing a rise of approximately 5% on 2022
- Enforcements were issued on the following: Twist rides (six), high speed (five), log flume (one), integrated frogs (five), Star Flyers (four) and general electrical issues (six)
- Three improvement notices were issued, five prohibition notices and notification of contravention letters as part of FFI (fee for intervention)
- Issues included electrical safety breaches, missing bulbs, faulty restraint systems and incorrectly terminated cabling

The enforcement actions, a slight rise in number on the previous year, are a clear indicator that work must be done to tighten up safety standards in our industry, and this year the HSE has told us its areas of focus. Again, 100 visits will be conducted in 2024 across the UK, to a mix of fixed and travelling sites. Issues under investigation will include:

- Electrical controls and high speed rides
- Round-ups
- Tagedas (a new piece of work looking at construction integrity of sub-frame)
- General electrical safety
- Miamis, Twists, Crazy Frogs
- Safe working practices on fixed sites for people entering prohibited areas
- Further guidance from HSE on foreseeability and taking reasonably practicable measures to manage risks

Our industry takes the safety of its visitors, employees and contractors very seriously and ADIPS inspection bodies work effectively with controllers all year round to ensure standards are maintained. The non-conformances do tell us, however, that the job will never



RKMS Ltd CEO John Keen at a recent ADIPS conference © AntiroMedia

be done when it comes to people's safety and it's clear from the HSE update that in some areas, we could do better.

For ADIPS' part, we recently announced a partnership with RKMS to deliver a comprehensive auditing programme for inspection bodies in the amusements industry. The standards set by our IBs are generally very high but audits guard against complacency and highlight areas where we could improve.

Compliance specialists RKMS and ADIPS will work together with IBs to enhance safety standards for amusement devices on theme parks, fairgrounds and piers, and outdoor events. We believe this is a very positive step forward not only for ADIPS, but for the amusements industry as a whole. Audits underpin our inspections regime and we wanted to put in place a secure, sustainable system with a partner that understands the importance of safety to our sector. With RKMS, I believe we have done just that.

A final update of note from the FJAC meeting in December was news of a review of HSG 175, the HSE's safety and health guidance for the amusements industry. HSE is sending invitations to join work groups, inviting representations from across the board, including inspection bodies and operators.

Initial meetings were due to be held in late January with information gathered to inform draft guidance in March. HSE will take on board comments, plus parts of the guidance, HSE considers require revision, with the aim of formulating text and meeting again in mid-July to discuss those revisions to hone it down.

There will then be an ongoing iterative process from mid-July until a text is finalised for comment towards the end of 2024. It is hoped the new revised guidance will be published before the middle of 2025.

HSG 175 guidance is important because it sets out what the Fairgrounds and Amusement Parks Joint Advisory Committee (FJAC) considers are appropriate measures for those involved in the industry to reduce risks, work safely and comply with the law. For this reason, ADIPS will give whatever support we can to David and his team to ensure the next iteration of HSG 175 is fit for purpose for a safe and thriving amusements industry.



## **WUTHICHA LUANGAMORNLE OF SIAM AMAZING PARK IN BANGKOK, THAILAND, HAS NOW STARTED HIS ONE-YEAR TERM AS IAAPA CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD.**

Editor Beth Whitaker discovers how his life-long time in the industry will serve him well in this new role.





Luangamornlert's chairmanship will initiate three years in a row of international chairmen for IAAPA, with Massimiliano Freddi, founder of the pair of Wonderwood attractions in Italy, assuming the role in 2025, and Luciana Periales, CEO of Neverland Park in Argentina, becoming chair in 2026.

**YOU WERE QUITE LITERALLY, BORN INTO THE INDUSTRY. HOW DID YOU KNOW THIS WAS DEFINITELY THE CAREER PATH FOR YOU?**

Well, because it is your life and you're just going about it every day, you don't really think about it. It was only once I left Thailand for the UK to study that I started to understand what makes it such a great industry. You begin to look at your friends and other people working in different industries... Their routine and so on - while we have it tough in that it never stops, you do it because you love it. We work weekends, don't have holidays and so on, but you are working to make people happy. That is the most important thing and is the most wonderful way of making a living. This is what has kept me energised and enjoying working within the industry for all this time.

Then, when you join IAAPA, you start to see different people from different regions and different countries around the world and they also want to make people happy. It's about the people, the primary goal for the majority of people I meet here is not to make loads of money,, but to make people happy, and that's a good thing.

**I GUESS THE INDUSTRY BECOMES AN EXTENDED FAMILY IN A WAY DOESN'T IT?**

Yes... When you have the same goals, certainly. When we talk, we don't talk about how we could earn more

money, but we talk about how to make people safe, how we can serve our customers better, asking, how can we help our society in different ways? And that's what we talk about as part of the IAAPA and that's wonderful. Someone might bring something to the table that you've never thought about before and it makes you consider what you can contribute to the industry that's different.

**WHAT DO YOU FEEL ARE THE KEY INGREDIENTS TO A SUCCESSFUL PARK?**

The main and most important ingredient is to make sure you enjoy it and be focussed on making people happy. Customers who are happy are good for business.

**LOOKING INWARD, WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE YOUR STRENGTHS ARE AND WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BRING TO THE IAAPA ROLE?**

We have so many wonderful leaders in this industry and a lot of people within IAAPA have their own businesses, so it's less about leading and more about working together. What I do think I can bring, is that I'm approachable and able to talk to lots of people about lots of things. People open up to me and I'm pretty good at listening to the key takeaways from a conversation. So I can continue doing this and feed back to IAAPA to move things forward for our members.

**WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE IAAPA'S MAIN ROLE IN A MODERN SOCIETY IS AND HOW CAN IT CONTINUE TO SUPPORT ITS MEMBERS?**

The industry has changed so much over the years and IAAPA has to keep adapting as well. A lot of people think it's just about business, but actually it is about connection. Once we're connected and become friends, we naturally talk to each other more and ultimately

exchange and share information and experiences. IAAPA works as a key connector of people within the industry - it does it through various means. For example, the trade shows connect people for business purposes, then there are other events you can go to where the focus is more on networking - events such as park tours etc. Then there are the education sessions, where you can learn from industry peers... You might learn something new that you never thought of trying before. So for me, that's what the IAAPA does already and will continue to do as its reach across the industry increases.

We're working as a team at IAAPA to ensure the association continues to move forward as the industry does. We need different input from around the world to make sure that IAAPA is responsive to the needs of its global members, which is a tough thing to do as every part of the world operates differently. And this is part of my role within the team... Keep IAAPA informed, keep them on their toes and looking forwards.

### **IS THERE ANYTHING YOU'RE LOOKING TO FOCUS ON OR CHANGE WHILE IN THIS ROLE?**

Well there are so many things we're encouraging IAAPA to work on as it continues to grow... One of the main things for me is regionalisation and representation. Because IAAPA is based in North America, for a long time I feel it hasn't been as diverse as it could have been. So looking forward this is something we will work on - making sure regional members are more involved and understood. IAAPA is working hard to be more inclusive of all members.

Because I'm from Thailand and the industry isn't as big as in other countries, I was a bit reluctant as to whether I could represent the industry globally, but I've been reassured that it's not the size of the park you're from, or the size of the industry in your country... But your willingness to contribute - this is important.

### **IS THERE ANYBODY IN THE INDUSTRY THAT YOU REALLY ADMIRE?**

There are so many. I studied in the UK and was close to the Thompson family at the Pleasure Beach in Blackpool,



particularly Amanda, and Geoffrey - who was also a previous chairman of the IAAPA. I first met them when I was about 13-years-old, they helped me to grow in the industry and so I have a lot to thank them for. Someone else in the industry I admire is Mario Mamom - the first Asian chair from the Philippines. I grew up with the idea that it had to be someone from North America or Europe but he showed me that it can be done and you don't have to be from one of the big parks or a big country. So I owe a lot to him. And of course there's my predecessor Jim Pattison, he is great. He's doing amazing things, things that I never thought people would be able to think of and he helped me go beyond the fear factor and my psychological boundaries to become more ambitious.

### **CAN YOU REMEMBER THE FIRST AND LAST AMUSEMENT RIDE THAT YOU WENT ON?**

Well the earliest would be a carousel somewhere I think, in Disney World when I came to the IAAPA show when I was about 11-years-old. The most recent amusement experience was at Tron at Disney World - the entire board of directors went last March.

### **ARE THERE ANY PROJECTS OR PARKS YOU WISH YOU HAD BEEN INVOLVED IN?**

There's so many. One of the privileges of being on the board of directors for IAAPA is that you are informed about these new developments around the world. There's so many projects going on and without naming names, the projects in China are amazing.





# “MY IAAPA 53 AND COUNTING!”

By: Dennis Speigel

**During these 53 years, I have always looked forward with great anticipation to attending the IAAPA Expo to see what's new and exciting, but most of all to meet my friends from around the world in our wonderful industry who attend each year.**

It is truly amazing to see how IAAPA has grown since those early days. When I first began going to IAAPA, total attendance was just over 1,000 people. Today, we are approaching 40,000 attendees from over 120 countries.

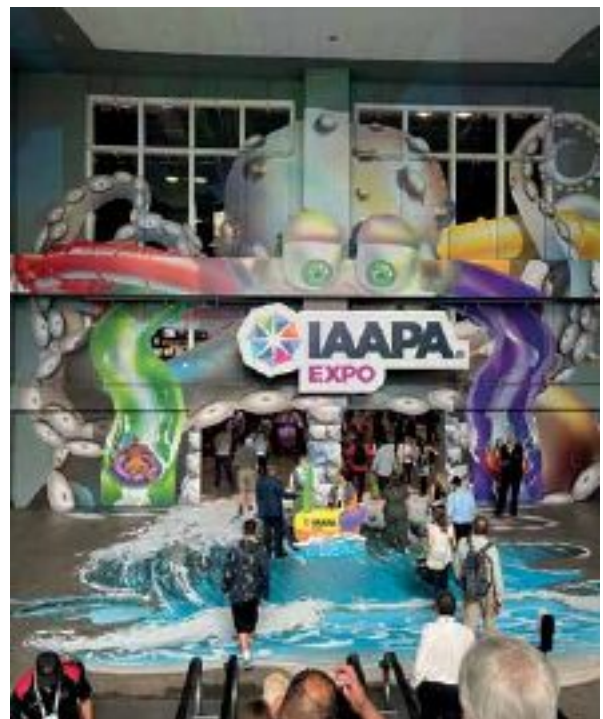
Each year, we see new technologies developed and displayed, which positively affect and enhance our entertainment programs in ways that were unknown 20 years ago. Technological advancements are what have allowed us to improve our operating programs at basically every level, including admissions, food and beverage, rides safety, and show quality. Each year, the exhibits and improvements on display are truly amazing.

As an example, just a short five or six years ago, we began seeing how drones could not only help from a safety and security standpoint, but how they have also become a huge part of the entertainment program. There was an amazing drone show in Orlando this year put on by Sky Elements Drone Shows. It broke Guinness World Records by displaying the largest aerial image of a flag formed by multi-coloured rover drones.

In addition to this, we saw new highly themed roller coaster cars unveiled, such as the Top Thrill 2, manufactured by Zamperla and to be operated in 2024 at Cedar Point in Sandusky, Ohio. SeaWorld unveiled its Bolliger & Mabillard (B&M) snowmobile-themed vehicle for its new Penguin Trek attraction, opening in 2024 in Orlando.

It was announced that over 1,100 companies exhibited their wares during the IAAPA Expo. These exhibitors consumed more than a half million square feet in display area.

Always one of the major highlights of the exhibition is the leadership breakfast where, this year, Scott O'Neill, CEO



of Merlin Entertainments, presented his new leadership philosophy for the company, having just taken over the company within the last year. The Merlin story is an incredible example of our industry spreading fun around the world. There are numerous parties and evening events hosted during IAAPA by both the association and manufacturers and suppliers. One of the most popular events that is looked forward to by invitees is the Ripley Entertainment – Premier Rides annual themed suite that is held over the three main nights of the convention. It is fair to say that many a business deal is originated at the suite by the operators and suppliers. It is always a wonderful and entertaining suite to meet and say hello to friends.





While the IAAPA show is always a 9 on a scale of 10, over the last couple of years, changes have been made to some of the programs, such as the opening ceremony where the award programs have been pared back as in 2022 and not even presented at the main exhibition show in 2023. This year, the association decided to change its opening program, eliminating the awards such as Meritorious Service Award, Lifetime Achievement, and Hall of Fame inductees said to be given at a subsequent new meeting held in Las Vegas in March of 2024. In my opinion and many other people from whom I heard, this change was an error. The level of importance given to these awards and the people to whom they are given should be presented at the industry's largest exhibition and opening forum. This includes the "in memoriam" presentation which showcases our industry colleagues who have left us and this was also omitted from this year's exhibition.

The management of the association, when questioned why these changes were happening, indicated that they wanted to try something new. I am the first one to say I believe change is good and absolutely necessary. For the presentations of Awards discussed above, these need to be presented at the industry's largest global show and forum, Orlando IAAPA.

All in all, the 2023 show was very good, but as an industry, let's never lose sight of the fact that our industry has always been an association of "members serving members". Our leaders from within the parks and manufacturer segments, when given the responsibility of serving on the board and committees, must always be vocal and participative in major decisions. That's why they are in these advisory roles.

They need to speak up particularly when an announcement in planning of actions being worked on are not well accepted by members in the inner circle. Keep in mind IAAPA Orlando is the "Big Dog" among our global satellite exhibitions. Big honours deserve to be awarded at the Big show. If it ain't broke... don't change it.

#### About ITPS

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## February 27 – 29 2024

**IAAPI Amusement Expo, Bombay Exhibition Centre, Goregaon East, Mumbai, INDIA**  
**Contact:** Indian Association of Amusement Parks and Industries, 404 Shreya House, Pareira Hill Road, Andheri East, Mumbai 400 099 India  
**Tel:** +91 22 28386829  
**Email:** tradeshowchairman@iaapi.org  
**www.iaapi.org**

## March 5 - 7 2024

**DEAL 2024, Dubai World Trade Centre, Dubai, UAE**  
**Contact:** International Expo-Consults (IEC)  
**Tel:** +971 4 3435777  
**Email:** deal@iecdubai.com  
**www.dealmiddleeastshow.com**

## March 18 – 20 2024

**CAE Beijing 2024, China International Exhibition Centre, Shunyi New Venue, Beijing, CHINA**  
**Contact:** Katie Wang, L&A International Ltd, 6 Penmere Grove, Sale, Cheshire, M33 4FP, UK  
**Tel:** +44 (0)161 6100022  
**Email:** katie.w@chinaattractionsexpo.org  
**www.chinaattractionsexpo.org**

## May 7 – 9. 2024

**Saudi Entertainment & Amusement Expo, Riyadh Front Exhibition & Convention Centre, Riyadh, SAUDI ARABIA**  
**Contact:** DMG Events  
**Tel:** +971 448 0355  
**Email:** info@dmgevents.com  
**www.saudientertainmentexpo.com**

## May 10 – 12

**2024 ASIA AMUSEMENT & ATTRACTIONS EXPO, China Import & Export Fair Complex, Guangzhou, CHINA**  
**Contact:** Tina Chang  
**Email:** sales@grandeurhk.com  
**Website:** aaaexpos.com

## May 28 - 30

**IAAPA Expo Asia 2024, Queen Sirikit National Convention Center, Bangkok, THAILAND**  
**Contact:** International Association of Amusement Parks & Attractions, 4155 West Taft Vineland Road, Orlando, Florida, USA  
**Tel:** +1 321 319 7600  
**Fax:** +1 321 319 7690  
**Email:** iaapa@IAAPA.org  
**www.iaapa.org/expos/iaapa-expo-asia**

## July 3 – 5

**LIVEnt, Events & Amusement Expo Tokyo, Tokyo Big Sight, Tokyo, JAPAN**  
**Contact:** Rx Japan Ltd.  
**Tel:** +813 3349 8510  
**Email:** live-expo.eng.jp@rxglobal.com  
**www.live-expo.jp/hub/en-gb/exhibit/event.html**

## July 18 – 20

**Philippine Attraction & Amusement Expo 2024, World Trade Centre Metro Manila, PHILIPPINES**  
**Contact:** HQ Bizlink International Pte Ltd,  
**Email:** mail@hqbizlinkintl.com  
**www.pa-expo.net**

## August 28 – 29

**Theme Park – Water Park Expo Vietnam 2024, Tan Son Nhat Pavilion Convention Center, Ho Chi Minh City, VIETNAM**  
**Contact:** Fireworks Trade Media Co., Ltd. 18th floor, Indochina Park Tower 4, Nguyen Dinh Chieu, Da Kao Ward, District 1, Ho Chi Minh City, VIETNAM  
**Tel:** +84 28 6654 9268  
**Email:** viet@fireworksviet.com  
**www.themeparkvietnam.com**

## September 3 – 5

**Thailand Amusement & Attraction Parks Expo (TAAPE), Impact Exhibition Centre, Bangkok, THAILAND**  
**Contact:** Guangdong Grandeur International Exhibition Group, 7/F, Block C, Poly World Trade Centre, No. 1000 Xingangdong Road, Haizhu District, Guangzhou, China  
**Tel:** 13104892856  
**Email:** Sales@grandeurhk.com  
**Website:** www.taapeexpo.com

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 'Big Bear Mountain' at Dollywood

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# Flying Coaster



Track Height  
43.3m



Track Length  
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Max Running  
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Area  
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